



The Library
of the
University of North Carolina



Collection of North Caroliniana

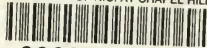
CB

B65w

c.3

CB
B65-w
C.3

UNIVERSITY OF N.C. AT CHAPEL HILL



00032193750

THIS TITLE HAS BEEN MICROFILMED

**This book must not
be taken from the
Library building.**

116 .
77

10

11

12

13

To.

Prof. N. W. Walker,

with regards of

Marcus Wright

Washington

July 11. 1911

n.



Your Obedient
Humble Servant

Wm. Blount

SOME ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE AND SERVICES

OF
WILLIAM BLOUNT,

AN OFFICER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY, MEMBER OF THE
CONTINENTAL CONGRESS, AND OF THE CONVENTION
WHICH FRAMED THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED
STATES, ALSO GOVERNOR OF THE TERRITORY
SOUTH OF THE OHIO RIVER, AND SENATOR
IN CONGRESS U. S. 1783-1797.

TOGETHER WITH A

FULL ACCOUNT OF HIS IMPEACHMENT AND TRIAL IN CONGRESS,
AND HIS EXPULSION FROM THE U. S. SENATE.

BY

GEN. MARCUS J. WRIGHT.

E. J. GRAY, PUBLISHER:
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1884.

BY E. J. GRAY,

in the Office of the Librarian of Congress.

PREFACE.

Among the pioneer patriots of the territory south of the Ohio, who asserted the rights of its settlers both in council and in the field, none deserve more grateful remembrance than William Blount.

After a careful study of his life and character, I do not hesitate to say that in breadth of intellect, deep thought, untiring activity, intrepid perseverance, and broad patriotism he had few equals and no superior among his colleagues.

He united in his character the gentleman, the soldier, the statesman and the citizen; and all in the most perfect harmony of those qualities which challenge admiration in both public and private life. Defamed and traduced for a brief time in his life by the followers of a strong partizan administration under which his service as senator commenced; expelled from his seat in a manner so hasty and on evidence so slight that its reading now excites wonder, he never failed to retain the fullest confidence of the people of Tennessee, who demonstrated it by placing him afterwards in the highest positions of trust in the State.

The great and unparalleled growth of the country; the startling events which have occurred, notably among them our great civil war; and other causes have prevented such examination and publication of the services and sacrifices of our pioneers, and their great results, as is due to them and to the truth of history. It is with this view that the writer (or rather compiler) has undertaken this sketch of the life and services of Governor Blount. A careful perusal of his history has led me to attempt in an humble way to do justice to the life and character of a man whose great and diversified public services were rendered in a field so broad, and at a time so marked with important events, (but succeeded in later years by a civil revolution of such magnitude,) that he and those who served the country with him have been relegated to almost oblivion. Governor Blount lived in an age when conspicuous merit alone secured commanding influence. It was among the most independent, adventurous, self-reliant individualisms in history. His brilliant qualities pointed to him as one of the leaders in the

890951

grand march of civilization that was gradually unfolding itself in the great valley of the Mississippi. The race that has ever moved over ocean and mountain had scaled the Alleghanies and taken possession of the fertile plains of the mighty West. There it met every privation and obstruction that isolation and a barbarous foe could oppose. Thrown into new scenes, far from the support and succor of their government, they had to rely upon their own genius for their laws and protection. Thus relieved of all dependence upon old prejudices and methods, they devised institutions suited to their own happiness. Every energy of body and mind was stimulated into vigorous life. It was amid such scenes and such men that this remarkable man was followed in counsel and the field, with unflinching faith and unbending purpose, in prosperity and adversity. No wonder that he sought the happiness and prosperity of his companions of the wilderness, whilst he advanced the National borders and glory, without reference to the central power. To him and them it was a courageous sacrifice for National honor and security, as well as for individual happiness.

By far the most interesting portion of this narrative, relating to the family and private life of Governor Blount, will be found in an unpublished manuscript, which is entirely authentic, and which has been quoted without change,

I am also indebted for valuable information and services to Ex-Gov. James D. Porter, Ex-Senator Joseph S. Fowler, and to Rev. Dr. Humes, all of Tennessee, and especially to Mr. Wm. Macon Coleman, of North Carolina, who has rendered me most valuable assistance in the preparation of this little volume.

For whatever it is worth, I hereby dedicate it to the Tennessee Historical Society, and trust it will meet with the approval of its members, who I know are desirous of placing the true history of all of Tennessee's distinguished sons before the world.

Trusting that not only the people of Tennessee, but all others who are interested in the truth of history, will appreciate my attempt to elucidate it in these pages, I submit it to the candid judgment of my readers.

MARCUS J. WRIGHT.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *March*, 1884.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The Blount family.—Settlement in North Carolina.—A Revolutionary family.—Governor Blount an officer in the Continental army.—Marries Mary Grainger.—A member of the General Assembly at intervals from 1780 to 1790.—Member of the Continental Congress in 1783 and 1784 and again in 1786 and 1787.—A delegate from North Carolina to the Convention which framed the Federal Constitution in 1787.—A member of the State Convention which ratified that instrument in 1789.—Favors the cession to the United States of the territory now Tennessee.—Takes great interest in the affairs of the western settlers.—Makes the treaty with the Cherokees at Hopewell.—Also the treaty at the same place with the Choctaws and Chickasaws.—The State of Frankland.—Governor Blount commissioned by President Washington as Governor of the Territory in 1790.—Appointed also Superintendent of Indian affairs, embracing the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws and Chickasaws.—His personal character.—The family from which he descended had given birth to three distinct races of peers.—Genealogy of the family brought down to Governor Blount.—Governor Blount organizes the territorial government at his headquarters in the fork of the Holston and Watauga.—John Sevier and James Robertson commissioned Brigadier-Generals.—Governor Blount visits the settlements and inquires into the condition and wants of the people.—His labors in his double office of Governor and Superintendent.—The seat of Government established at Knoxville.—Domestic life.—Tennessee admitted as a State.—Governor Blount elected a member of the Convention which framed the Constitution.—Chosen President of that body by a unanimous vote.—Elected United States Senator by the first Legislature of the State in 1796.—A full and complete account of his expulsion from the Senate and of his impeachment and trial before that body.—The people of Tennessee resent this treatment to their representative.—His enthusiastic reception at home and new honors conferred upon him.—His vindication.—Honors to his memory.

CHAPTER I.

Genealogy of the Blount Family—Battle of Alamance, 1771—Willie Blount a Judge of the Supreme Court of Tennessee and afterwards Governor—Member of Constitutional Convention of Tennessee, 1834. Marriage of William Blount to Mary Grainger—Sketch of Colonel Cabell Grainger—Cession of Territory by North Carolina called the Territory South of the Ohio River—William Blount appointed by President Washington Governor of the Territory, 7th August, 1790, and Superintendent of Indian Affairs—Sketch of the English family from which he descended.

WILLIAM BLOUNT.

“Colonel Jacob Blount, the son of Thomas Blount and his wife, Elizabeth Reading, was born in 1726, in Bertie County, North Carolina. He was married in 1748 to Barbara, daughter of John Gray, a Scottish gentleman who, with his wife, Ann Bryan, came over in 1734, in the suite of Gabriel Johnston, the Royal Governor of the Province, and settled in Bertie County. Jacob Blount, by his marriage with Barbara Gray, had eight children, of whom William, afterwards Governor, was the oldest. By a subsequent marriage with Hannah Baker, daughter of Edward Salten, he had five other children, one of whom, Willie, was Governor of Tennessee from 1809 to 1815.

Jacob Blount died in 1789, at Blount Hall, his country seat in Pitt County, to which he had removed, and which is now the property of his grandson, George Blount. He was a man of prominence and popularity in his days, and was a member of the War Congress of North Carolina in 1775 and 1776.

He and his son William participated in the famous battle of Alamance in 1771.

Of his thirteen children these nine reached mature age, namely: William, afterwards Governor; Anne, wife of James Harvey; John Gray; Louisa, wife of Richard Blackledge; Reading, Thomas, Jacob, Willie, afterwards Governor, and Sharpe.

William, afterwards Governor, was born in Bertie County, March 26, 1749. His brothers, Thomas and Reading, were like himself, leading spirits in the Revolutionary War, and were officers in the

military service. They and their brother John G. were all at different times members of the General Assembly, or of the War Congress which sat during the early part of the struggle. Thomas was taken prisoner and carried to England, where he underwent a long confinement. He was afterwards and for many years a member of Congress from the Edgecomb District, up to his death in 1812. John G. and Reading resided in Beaufort County, where they reached influential positions and were held in high estimation, and have left many descendents, who honorably represent their names and lineage. Willie became a judge of the Supreme Court in Tennessee, and afterwards Governor. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1834, and died soon afterwards at his residence in Clarksville, greatly revered by the community.

As Jacob Blount, the father of this large family, was a man of considerable estate, his children were educated in a manner corresponding to his ample means and to his high local position. William, who had already become a rising man, was married February 12, 1778, to Mary, the daughter of Colonel Caleb Grainger, of Wilmington, a member of the General Assembly from New Hanover County. William was generally a member of that body from 1780 to 1790 and contemporaneously with that service was a member of the Continental Congress in 1783 and 1784, and again in 1786 and 1787. He represented North Carolina in the Convention which framed the Federal Constitution in 1781, and was in the State Convention which ratified that instrument in 1789. He was an ardent friend of the act passed in 1789 for the cession to the United States of the western domain, now Tennessee. During these years of constant and varied public service, he took great interest in the affairs of the Western Settlers, and warmly sympathized with them in their difficulties with the Indian tribes. As the special agent of his State he was present in her behalf at the treaty made with the Cherokees at Hopewell, on the Howe, November 28, 1785. In the same capacity he attended at the treaties made at the same place in January, 1786, with the Choctaws and Chickasaws.

The generous cession of her territory by North Carolina, was made for the three-fold purpose of cementing the Union, of assisting to pay the public debt, and of ensuring the protection of the inhabitants of that portion of the State. The bold pioneers residing in what is now upper East Tennessee had as early as 1795 set up the independent State of Frankland, which for several years was administered and partially maintained in open defiance of North

Carolina, who asserted by force her authority in and over the same region. Many serious conflicts occurred between the adherents of the two Governments. Happily for all parties the cession Act of 1789, followed by its acceptance by Congress, on the 21st of April, 1790, opened the way for the speedy cure of all three troubles. The ceded country, which had been an integral portion of the State of North Carolina and entitled to representation in its General Assembly, was erected into "The Territory South of the Ohio River." In compliance with the wishes as well of the western inhabitants as of those of the old State, William Blount was commissioned by President Washington on the 7th of August, 1790, as governor of the Territory. He also received the appointment of Superintendent of Indian Affairs, embracing the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws and Chickasaws. Says Dr. Ramsey, the learned author of the "Annals of Tennessee," speaking of Mr. Blount :

copy
 "He was of an ancient English family of wealth and rank, which at an early day emigrated to North Carolina. The name is often mentioned in the annals of that State during the Revolution. Mr. Blount was remarkable for his address, courtly manners, benignant feelings and a most commanding presence. His urbanity, his personal influence over men of all conditions and ages, his hospitality unostentatiously, but yet elegantly and gracefully extended to all, won upon the affections and regard of the populace and made him a universal favorite. He was at once the social companion, the well-bred gentleman and the capable officer."

The allusion by the historian to the lineage of the Governor, will justify a brief statement of it from authentic records.

This ancient family has given birth to three distinct races of peers—the Lords of Guisins, in France; the Barons of Ixworth, in Suffolk, and the Barons of Montjoy of Thurveston, County Derby.

Sir Robert Le Blount and Sir William Le Blount, two sons of Rudolph, Count of Guisins, accompanied William the Norman in his invasion of England A. D. 1066. Sir Robert had command of the Conqueror's ships of war, and is styled "Dux navium militarium." He was the first feudal Baron of Ixworth, and his portion of the *spolia optima* embraced thirteen manors in Suffolk. His wife was Gundred, daughter of Henry, Earl Ferrers.

Sir William Le Blount, the other brother, was a general of foot at Hastings, and had grants of seven lordships in Lincolnshire. His great-great-grand-daughter, Maria Le Blount, married her

kinsman, Sir Stephen Le Blount, a descendant of Sir Robert, Baron of Ixworth, in the thirteenth century; and thus the blood of the two brothers who accompanied the Norman, was reunited in the persons of their descendants. Sir Robert Blount, the son of this marriage, became the husband of Isabel, daughter of the feudal Lord of Odensels; and their son, Sir William Blount, married the Lady Isabel de Beaumont, daughter of William, Earl of Warwick. Sir Walter, the son of this marriage, left a son, Sir John Blount, who married Iselda, daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Montjoy. From this Sir John we pass to his lineal descendant, Sir Walter Blount, a baronet in the reign of Charles the First. This gentleman suffered much in the cause of that monarch, and was imprisoned at Oxford and in the Tower of London. The present representative of the family in England is Sir Edward Blount, or his son, Sir Walter de Sodington, who was born 19th of December, 1830.

About the year 1669 three of Sir Walter Blount's sons emigrated to Virginia. One of them remained there and became the head of a long line of descendants. The other two, James and Thomas, crossed over into North Carolina and settled in the country bordering on Albermarle Sound. Thomas, the son of this Thomas, married Anne Reading and left a number of children, one of whom was Jacob, already mentioned as the father of the two governors. The family in Eastern North Carolina is large and its blood flows in the veins of many of the worthiest citizens of that honored State.

CHAPTER II.

Gov. Blount Enters on his duties 10th of Oct., 1790—Headquarters Established at Fork of the Holston and Watauga Rivers—Visits the Mero District—On his recommendation John Sevier and James Robertson appointed Brigadier-Generals—Extracts from Ramsey's "History of Tennessee"—Correspondence with Governors of adjoining States—Negotiations with the Indians—The Chiefs of the Various Nations meet him near Knoxville and a treaty signed 2d of July, 1791, called the Treaty of Holston, which was ratified in November following by the U. S. Senate—The Seat of Government established at Knoxville, named in honor of General John Knox, Secretary of War—The Governor's Hospitality—His extensive negotiations and the respect he had from all persons with whom he came in contact—The Ordinance of 1787—Slavery—The first Legislative Assembly meets at Knoxville, August 25, 1794, and sat until 30th September—Blount College Incorporated—A guard of soldiers escort the Members from the Mero District to protect them from the Indians.—Steps taken June 29, 1795, for admission of Territory as a State—Enumeration Act—Proclamation calling Convention at Knoxville, 11th January, 1796, and Gov. Blount Elected one of the Members, and on Meeting of Convention, was unanimously Elected President—Charles McClung, Gen. James White, Gen. Andrew Jackson, Gen. James Robertson, and Archibald Roane also Members—The first Constitution of the State adopted, which stood unchanged for thirty-years.

We now return to the narrative ; Governor Blount reached the theatre of his new duties on the 10th of October, 1790, and established his headquarters at the house of William Cobb, on the fork of the Holston and Watauga. Here he organized his government and proceeded to appoint officers, civil and military, for the eastern portion of the Territory. Having put all things in order, he set out on the 27th of November following for the District of Mero, then composed of Davidson, Sumner and Tennessee Counties.

He could not commission officers of the rank of Brigadier-General, but on his recommendation the President issued commissions

for these officers to John Sevier and James Robertson. In this visit to the remote settlements he became acquainted with the people and their condition, and inspired them with confidence in his devotion to their interests.

From thenceforward he was indefatigable in the discharge of the varied and responsible obligations of his position. The double duties of Governor and Superintendent of Indian Affairs were performed with an ability of the highest order.

We quote again from the historian, Ramsey :

“Some judgment may be formed of the difficult, responsible and delicate duties which the two offices devolved on the Governor, by a brief reference to the posture of affairs when he received his appointments. * * * * *

“To reconcile all these animosities between savages, and to protect the Territory from their injurious effects, required frequent conferences and correspondence imposing a Herculean labor upon Mr. Blount. His correspondence with Governors of adjoining States, with the Secretary of War, and with the authorities of Spain, is extensive and minute. * * * * *

“To keep the Indian tribes quiet, to conciliate their friendship to the United States, to save the Territory from invasion and to neutralize and prevent foreign influence, and at the same time not to jeopard negotiations then pending, required a high degree of administrative capacity and diplomatic talent. In these arduous duties he was aided by his two private secretaries, the late Gov. Willie Blount and the late Honorable Hugh Lawson White.”

The question of boundary with the Cherokees, and the ill blood which grew out of it, demanded the early attention of the Governor. He prevailed upon them to meet him with their chieftains and head warriors, on his own grounds and around his residence, near the embryo village of Knoxville. Twelve hundred other Indians, it is said, were in attendance. Here a treaty was signed on the 2d of July, 1791, called the treaty of Holston, which was ratified by the Senate of the United States in November following.

The Governor had established the seat of Government at Knoxville before there was any town there, and named it in honor of General Knox, the Secretary of War. The lots were laid out for public sale until February, 1792. It was soon resorted to by emigrants, among whom were quite a number of men of education and refinement, with their families. Knoxville throughout his administration was noted for intelligence and a high tone of refinement and morality.

The mansion of the Governor, presided over by his accomplished wife, was the home of an elegant hospitality. In his intercourse with his own officers, with Federal officials, with the Executives of the adjacent States, with the Spanish Governors, and with the treacherous savages, he commanded universal respect. Clothed with large prerogatives, he prepared and promulgated his own laws, which were entitled "By William Blount, Governor in and over the Territory."

His time was much engrossed with Indian agencies, with the manifold civil and military duties connected with his office, and in preparing the Territory for self-government. Under the famous "Ordinance of 1787" which was made generally applicable to this Territory, (except as to slavery, which by the very terms of the Cession Act the Federal Government bound itself never to disturb,) the Territory was entitled to a Legislative Assembly when it should contain five thousand free male inhabitants. The Governor being satisfied that there was the requisite number, ordered an election for members. This body met in Knoxville, August 25, 1794, and sat until the 30th of September. At this session was incorporated Blount College at Knoxville, named in honor of the Governor, and which is now East Tennessee University. Such was the danger from the Indians that the Governor, at the request of the members from Mero District, ordered a guard of soldiers to escort them home.

In spite of all adverse circumstances the population under his fostering care and wise counsels had so increased, that under his proclamation the Legislature was assembled on the 29th of June, 1795, to take steps for the admission of the Territory into the Union as a State. An Act was passed on the 11th of July for an enumeration of the inhabitants, and if they should be found to be sixty thousand, then the Governor to issue a recommendation for the election of delegates to meet at Knoxville to form a State Constitution. The full number being found, the proclamation was duly issued, and the delegates met at Knoxville on the 11th of January, 1796. Mr. Blount himself was elected one of the members, and when the convention met, was unanimously chosen its President. Among the members were Charles McClung, General James White, Andrew Jackson, General James Robertson, and Archibald Roane, besides many others eminent for wisdom and patriotism. The first of their labors was a constitution, which stood unchanged for thirty-eight years.

CHAPTER III.

John Sevier elected Governor—Meeting of General Assembly 28th of March, 1796—William Blount and William Cocke unanimously elected U. S. Senators—Meeting of General Assembly again July 30, 1796, and re-election of Blount and Cocke 2d of August, under decision of Congress that former election was premature—Willie Blount elected Supreme Court Judge—Messrs. Blount and Cocke take their seats in the Second Session of the 4th Congress—Andrew Jackson Representative—The First Session of 5th Congress—President Adams on July 3, 1797, sends Confidential Message to Congress—Copy of letter from Governor Blount to one Carey submitted with Message—Governor Blount absent at the time, but afterwards comes into the Senate—Questions about the Letter in open Senate—His reply—Copy of the Carey Letter.

At the election for Governor under the Constitution, Mr. Blount was not a candidate, and the choice of the State fell upon the popular favorite, John Sevier. The Legislature met on the 28th of March, 1796, and at that session William Blount and William Cocke were unanimously elected Senators in Congress. The Legislature met again on the 30th of July, 1796, and Congress having in the meantime decided that the March election of Senators was premature, because the State had not then been admitted into the Union, Messrs. Blount and Cocke were again elected on the 2d of August. At this session Willie Blount, then only thirty years of age, was elected a Judge of the Supreme Court.

The second Session of the Fourth Congress began on December 5, 1796, and ended March 3, 1797. Governor Blount took his seat; Mr. Cocke was his colleague and Andrew Jackson was Representative in the lower House.

On July 3, 1797, the President, Mr. Adams, sent in a confidential message to both Houses of Congress, in which he stated that the condition of the country was critical.

The ground for this alarm seems to have been a letter from Governor Blount to one Carey, a copy of which letter accompanied the President's message. Governor Blount was absent when the letter was first read. He afterwards came into the chamber, and on motion

the copy of the letter was again read, and Governor Blount was requested to declare if he had written it. He replied that he had written a letter to Carey, but was unable to say whether the copy was a correct one or not, without recurrence to his papers; and he desired to have until the next day to answer. Whereupon it was ordered that the message and papers lie for consideration.

The letter to Carey reads as follows, viz:

“COL. KING’S IRON WORKS,

“April 21, 1797.

“DEAR CAREY:

“I wished to have seen you before I returned to Philadelphia, but I am obliged to return to the session of Congress which commences on the 15th of May.

“Among other things that I wished to have seen you about was the business Captain Chisholm mentioned to the British Minister last winter at Philadelphia.

“I believe, but am not quite sure, that the plan then talked of will be attempted this fall, and if it is attempted, it will be in a much larger way than then talked of, and if the Indians act their part, I have no doubt but it will succeed. A man of consequence has gone to England about the business; and if he makes arrangements, I shall myself have a hand in the business, and shall probably be at the head of the business on the part of the British.

You are, however, to understand that it is not yet quite certain that the plan will be attempted, and to do so will require all your management. I say will require all your management, because you must take care in whatever you say to Rogers or anybody else, not to let the plan be discovered by Hawkins, Dinsmoor, Byers or any other person in the interest of the United States or of Spain.

“If I attempt this plan, I shall expect to have you and all my Indian friends with me, but you are now in good business I hope, and you are not to risk the loss of it by saying anything that will hurt you until you again hear from me. Where Captain Chisholm is I do not know. I left home in Philadelphia in March, and he frequently visited the Minister and spoke about the subject; but I believe he will go into the Creek Nation by way of South Carolina or Georgia. He gave out that he was going to England, but I do not believe him. Among things that you may safely do, will be to keep up my consequence with Watts and the Creeks and Cherokees generally; and you must by no means say anything in favor of Hawkins, but as often as you can with safety

to yourself, you may teach the Creeks to believe he is no better than he should be. Any power or consequence he gets will be against our plan. Perhaps Rogers, who has no office to lose, is the best man to give out talks against Hawkins. Read the letter to Rogers, and if you think it best to send it, put a wafer in it and forward it to him by a safe hand; or perhaps, you had best send for him to come to you, and speak to him yourself respecting the state and prospect of things.

"I have advised you in whatever you do to take care of yourself. I have now to tell you to take care of me too, for a discovery of the plan would prevent the success and much injure all parties concerned. It may be that the Commissioners may not run the line as the Indians expect or wish, and in that case it is probable the Indians may be taught to blame me for making the treaty.

"To such complaints against me, if such there be, it may be said by my friends, at proper times and places, that Doublehead confirmed the treaty with the President at Philadelphia, and received as much as five thousand dollars a year to be paid to the Nation over and above the first price; indeed it may with truth be said that though I made the treaty, that I made it by the instructions of the President, and in fact, it may with truth be said that I was by the President instructed to purchase much more land than the Indians would agree to sell. This sort of talk will be throwing all the blame off me upon the late President, and as he is now out of office, it will be of no consequence how much the Indians blame him. And among other things that may be said for me, is that I was not at the running of the line, and that if I had been, it would have been more to their satisfaction. In short, you understand the subject, and must take care to give out the proper talks to keep my consequence with the Creeks and Cherokees. Can't Rogers contrive to get the Creeks to desire the President to take Hawkins out of the Nation? for if he stays in the Creek Nation, and gets the good will of the Nation, he can and will do great injury to our plan.

"When you have read this letter over three times, then burn it. I shall be in Knoxville in July or August, when I will send for Watts and give him the whiskey I promised him.

"I am, &c,

"WM. BLOUNT."

The preceding letter was enclosed in a cover, with the following directions, viz: "Mr. James Carey, Tellico Block House."

CHAPTER IV.

Mr. Cocke lays before the Senate a Letter from Mr. Blount—Resolutions of the Senate on Presentation of this Letter—Report of Mr. Ross—Mr. Blount Ordered by the Vice-President to attend the Senate—Removal of Injunction of Secrecy—Farther Report of Mr. Ross—Mr. Blount reads a Resolution—Mr. Blount allowed Counsel—He names as his counsel Messrs. Jared Ingersoll and Alexander G. Dallas—Mr. Blount Declines to Answer to the Authorship of the Carey Letter—Message from the House of Representatives—Mr. Blount enters into recognizance for his appearance with two sureties, namely Thomas Blount and Pierce Butler.

On July 4th, Mr. Cocke, Senator from Tennessee, laid before the Senate a letter from Mr. Blount, stating that it was necessary for him (Blount) to have further time for recurrence to his papers and other evidence to remove suspicions.

Whereupon it was

“*Resolved*, That so much of the Message from the President of the United States of the third instant, and the papers accompanying the same, as relates to a letter purporting to have been written by William Blount, a Senator from Tennessee, be referred to a select Committee, to consider and report what, in their opinion, it is proper for the Senate to do thereon; and that the said Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records, relating to the subject committed to them, and that Messrs. Ross, Stockton, Henry, Sedgwick, and Read be the Committee.”

And it was

“*Ordered*, That the Senate be, for the present, under the injunction of secrecy on the papers referred to in the above-mentioned Message.”

On July 5th, Mr. Ross, from the Committee, made a report and the report was read. On the same day Mr. Blount was ordered by the Vice-President to attend the Senate in his place without delay. It was also ordered that the injunction of secrecy respecting the Message and papers be removed.

On July 7th Mr. Ross made a further report. Whereupon Mr. Blount read in his place a declaration, purporting that he should attend in his own seat, from time to time, to answer to any allegations that may be brought against him. On motion of Mr. Blount that he be heard by counsel, not exceeding two, it was ordered

that the motion be allowed, and that Mr. Blount be furnished with copies of such papers as he might desire.

On July 7th, agreeably to the order of the day, the Senate proceeded to the consideration of the report of the Committee. Mr. Blount also notified the Senate that Jared Ingersoll and Alexander J. Dallas were the counsel he had employed.

The President then requested Mr. Blount to declare whether or not he was the author of a letter, a copy of which was communicated on third instant.

Mr. Blount declined to answer.

After debate it was agreed that the question before the Senate be postponed for the purpose of receiving a special message from the House of Representatives. Hereupon the following message was received from the House by Mr. Sitgreaves, one of its members, viz:

“Mr. President, I am commanded in the name of the House of Representatives, and of all the people of the United States, to impeach William Blount, a Senator of the United States, of high crimes and misdemeanors; and to acquaint the Senate that the House of Representatives will, in due time, exhibit particular articles against him and make good the same.

“I am further commanded to demand that the said William Blount be sequestered from his seat in the Senate; and that the Senate do take order for his appearance to answer the said impeachment.”

Whereupon the Senate requested him from his seat, and ordered that he enter with recognizance in the sum of twenty thousand dollars for himself, with two sufficient sureties in the sum of fifteen thousand dollars each. The condition of the recognizance was such that “if the said William Blount shall appear before the Senate of the United States to answer to certain charges of impeachment to be exhibited against him by the House of Representatives of the United States, and not depart therefrom without leave, that then the above recognizance shall cease to exist, otherwise be and remain in full force and virtue.”

The two sureties who signed with Governor Blount were Thomas Blount and Pierce Butler.

On July 8th, after notifying the House of its action in the premises, the Senate proceeded to the consideration of the report of the Committee to which the charges against Mr. Blount had been referred.

The full report of the Committee will be found in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V.

Full Report of the Committee on charges against Governor Blount, and Resolution that he had been Guilty of High Misdemeanor and recommending his Expulsion from the Senate—The Report Adopted by a Vote of 25 to 1—Mr. Tazewell, of Va., Casting the only Negative Vote—Review of the haste with which the Senate proceeded, and of the Evidence before it.

“The Committee to whom was referred that part of the President’s Message which relates to a letter purporting to have been written by William Blount, Esq., one of the Senators from the State of Tennessee, together with the papers accompanying the same, having had the same under their consideration, beg leave to make a further report :

“That Mr. Blount having declined an acknowledgement or denial of the letter imputed to him, and having failed to appear and give any satisfactory explanation respecting it, your Committee sent for the original letter which accompanies this report, and it is in the following words, viz :”

[Here follows the Carey letter above given.] The report then proceeds :

“Two Senators now present in the Senate have declared to the Committee that they are well acquainted with the handwriting of Mr. Blount, and have no doubt that this letter was written by him. Your Committee have examined many letters from Mr. Blount to the Secretary of War, a number of which are herewith submitted, as well as the letter addressed to Mr. Cocke, his colleague in the Senate, and to this Committee, respecting the business under consideration ; and find them all to be of the same handwriting with the letter in question. Mr. Blount has never denied this letter, but, on the other hand, when the copy transmitted to the Senate was read in his presence, on the third instant, he acknowledged in his place that he had written a letter to Carey, of which he had preserved a copy, but could not then decide whether the copy read was a true one. Your Committee are therefore fully persuaded that the original now produced was written and sent to Carey by Blount. They also find that this man Carey, to whom it was addressed, is, to the knowledge of Mr. Blount, in the pay

and employment of the United States, as their interpreter to the Cherokee Nation of Indians, and an assistant in the the public factory at Tellico Block House. That Hawkins, who is so often mentioned in this letter as a person who must be brought into suspicion among the Creeks, and if possible driven from his station, is the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the United States among the Southern Indians; Dinsmoor is agent for the United States in the Cherokee Nation; and Byers one of the agents in the public factory at Tellico Block House.

“The plan hinted at in this extraordinary letter, to be executed under the auspices of the British, is so capable of different constructions and conjectures, that your Committee at present forbear giving any decided opinion respecting it, except that to Mr. Blount’s own mind, it appeared to be inconsistent with the interests of the United States and of Spain, and he was thereby anxious to conceal it from both. But, when they consider his attempts to seduce Carey from his duty, as a faithful interpreter, and to employ him as an engine to alienate the affections and confidence of the Indians from the public officers of the United States residing among them; the measures he has proposed to excite a temper which must produce the recall or expulsion of our Superintendent from the Creek Nation; his insidious advice tending to the advancement of his own popularity and consequence, at the expense and hazard of the good opinion which the Indians entertain of this Government, and of the treaties subsisting between us and them, your Committee have no doubt that Mr. Blount’s conduct has been inconsistent with his public duty, renders him unworthy of a further continuance of his present public trust in this body, and amounts to a high misdemeanor. They, therefore, unanimously recommend to the Senate, an adoption of the following resolution:

“*Resolved*, That William Blount, Esq., one of the Senators of the United States, having been guilty of a high misdemeanor, entirely inconsistent with his public trust and duty as a Senator, be, and he hereby is, expelled from the Senate of the United States.”

The report was adopted by a vote of 25 to 1; Mr. Tazewell of Virginia alone voting in the negative.

This vote expelling Governor Blount was taken July 8th, five days after the attention of the Senate had been called to the matter by Mr. President Adams. There were two sets of proceedings against Governor Blount; the one, terminating with his expulsion

from the Senate, which has just been detailed; the other proceeding was his impeachment, of this we have yet to speak.

With regard to Governor Blount's expulsion, there are two facts which especially attract attention. These are first, the haste with which the matter was pressed to a conclusion; second, the overwhelming vote sustaining the report of the Committee. These two facts appearing upon the face of the record would naturally lead the general reader to conclude without hesitation that Mr. Blount was a dangerous traitor and conspirator and that no time was to be lost in rendering him powerless for mischief.

The only remark that seems pertinent just in this connection is this; the Committee relied solely upon the Carey letter as justifying their resolution of expulsion. The Committee, however, say "The plan hinted at, &c., is so capable of *different constructions and conjectures*, that your Committee at present forbear giving any decided opinion respecting it." But Governor Blount's guilt or innocence depended precisely upon what this plan was! All the matter about Hawkins, Dinsmoor, and Byers is evidence of guilt only on condition that the "plan" involved guilt. And what this "plan" was, the Committee did not pretend to know. But while disclaiming this knowledge and "forbearing" in consequence to express any opinion concerning it, they did *not* forbear to pronounce Governor Blount guilty. A strange inconsistency and one that gives ground to the suspicion, expressed at the time, that the expulsion resolution was rushed through under a panic created to subserve some of the political intrigues of the Adams administration.

At the period referred to, the intrigues of European courts were more familiar to our public men than to their successors of the present day. The United States were then engaged in delicate diplomatic proceedings with England, France, Spain, and also with the Indian Nations, which required great prudence and caution. It is not to be denied that American politicians were then moved by the ordinary motives of interest and ambition. It is worthy of remark, however, that "machine" politics were yet unknown and that railroads, oil companies and other monopolies had not yet opened out their seductions. The highest fame and power was to be acquired in the successful schemes of diplomacy. That secrecy is the prime condition of success in such enterprises has been well understood, at least since the days of Machiavelli, and the Committee made a long leap and arrived at a conclusion totally illogical when they inferred Governor Blount's guilt from

the fact that he wished his purpose (whatever that was) to be kept concealed from the agents of the United States and of Spain. That would be regarded as a strange process of reasoning at the present day which would infer guilt from secrecy in political affairs or from the circumstances that a Senator should want one man who was not his friend removed from office to make place for a man who was his friend. Governor Blount made no claim to what is known as modern Christian statesmanship; but he did claim to be a man of honor and to regulate his official life by those principles which were accepted as honorable by the public men both of England and America; and judged from these standards and the report of the Committee, the Carey letter was very far from being sufficient cause for his expulsion.

CHAPTER VI.

Governor Blount's Sureties Surrender Him, and he enters into a new Recognizance—The Disparity in the Amount of the two Bonds—He Forfeits his Recognizance—The Further Consideration of the Impeachment Postponed until the Next Session of Congress—The Senate Adjourned—The House Committee—Mr. Sitgreaves, Chairman of the Committee, Reports a Resolution of Impeachment—Opinions of the Attorney-General, Mr. Rawle, and Mr. Lewis—Mr. Gallatin Criticises their Opinions—The Question of the Liability of a Senator to Impeachment—Sequestration of Gov. Blount on demand of the House of Representatives.

After the adoption of the expulsion resolution, Governor Blount's sureties surrendered him and were discharged from their recognizance. On the same day, July 8th, agreeably to an order of the Senate, Governor Blount entered into a recognizance of one thousand dollars for himself, with two sureties of five hundred dollars each, to make his appearance on Monday, July 10th to answer such articles of impeachment as might be preferred against him by the House of Representatives. It will be observed that the first recognizance was in the sum of twenty thousand dollars, with two sureties in the sum of fifteen thousand dollars each. The small amount of the present bond is significant. Did the Senate really believe that Blount was the conspirator they had declared him to be? If so, they were sadly derelict in their duty in not requiring a bond sufficient to provide against his further machinations.

Governor Blount forfeited his recognizance by not appearing on the 10th instant; and it was ordered that the further consideration of the impeachment be postponed until the next session of Congress. The President then adjourned the Senate without a day.

The Message and accompanying papers sent in July 3d, above mentioned, were referred in the House to a committee consisting of Messrs. Sitgreaves, Baldwin, Dana, Davison, and Hindman, "to examine the matter thereof, and report the same, with their opinion thereupon to the House."

On July 6th Mr. Sitgreaves reported the following resolution:

Resolved, That William Blount, Senator of the United States

from Tennessee, be impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors.”

The same day the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole on this resolution.

Mr. Sitgreaves said the President had taken the opinion of the Attorney-General, Mr. Rawle, and Mr. Lewis upon the Carey letter, and that these gentlemen concurred in three points, viz:

1. That the letter is evidence of crime.
2. That the crime was of the denomination of a misdemeanor.
3. That William Blount being a Senator is liable to impeachment for the said crime before the Senate.

Mr. Gallatin criticised pretty sharply these opinions and also the course of the President. He said :

“ He thought the answer of these legal gentlemen very curious ; viz: that this letter was evidence of crime ; that this crime was a misdemeanor ; and that it was liable to impeachment.” When the President asked advice, what he should do, the answer seemed to be a direction to that House what they should do ; and this was advice unasked.”

There was considerable discussion and a variety of opinion among members, both on the question whether a Senator is liable to impeachment at all, and on the further question as the proper mode of proceeding if he should be liable. Such proceedings, however, were had as resulted in the message of the House to the Senate, above given. It is to be remarked that in this message the House *demand*ed the sequestration of Governor Blount and that the Senate sequestered him, without protest to the *demand*.

CHAPTER VII.

Resolution of the House of Representatives to Appoint a Committee to Prepare Articles of Impeachment—Assembly of the Second Session of the Fifth Congress at Philadelphia, Nov. 13, 1797—Mr. Anderson Appointed Senator from Tennessee in place of Mr. Blount—Mr. Sitgreaves Presents his Report on Dec. 4th—Captain William Eaton.

On July 8th the House—

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to prepare and report articles of impeachment against William Blount, a Senator of the United States, impeached by this House of high crimes and misdemeanors, and that the said committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Mr. Sitgreaves, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Dana, Mr. Dawson, and Mr. Harper be a committee pursuant to said resolution
On July 10th it was by the House—

Resolved, That the Committee appointed to prepare and report Articles of Impeachment against William Blount, a Senator of the United States, impeached by this House of high crimes and misdemeanors, be authorized to sit during the recess of Congress.

Resolved, That the said Committee be instructed to inquire and, by all lawful means, to discover the whole nature and extent of the offense whereof the said William Blount stands impeached, and who are the parties and associates therein.

Ordered, That Mr. Dana be excused from serving on the Committee appointed to prepare and report Articles of Impeachment against William Blount, a Senator of the United States, and that Mr. Bayard be of the same Committee in his stead.

The second session of the Fifth Congress assembled at Philadelphia Nov. 13, 1797. Mr. Anderson had been appointed from Tennessee to fill Governor Blount's unexpired term.

On December 4 Mr. Sitgreaves, in the House of Representatives, gave notice that he was prepared to make a report from the Committee appointed at the last session to sit during the recess for the purpose of collecting evidence and substantiating charges against Senator Blount.

The injunction of secrecy was removed, and Mr. Sitgreaves pre-

sented the report to the Clerk to be read. It is a voluminous document, occupying fifty pages in the "Annals of Congress," as given in the Appendix. It embraces papers contained in a trunk of Governor Blount's, seized by order of Congress; a large number of letters to and from Governor Blount; a number of depositions and other matter. These papers are all indexed and referred to in letters, figures, and double letters. As the report consists principally of a reference to these papers and is unintelligible without a knowledge of their contents, these papers will be considered first.

We note briefly the contents of these papers *seriatim*. The more important of them will be given in full.

Captain William Eaton was the officer charged with executing the process of the House.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Testimony—Captain Eaton—Letter of Mr. Pickering, Secretary of State—Letter from Mr. Pickering to Captain Eaton—Letter from Captain Eaton to Mr. Sitgreaves—Letter from Mr. Harrison to Mr. Pickering—Certificate of Mr. Sitgreaves—Orders of House Committee to Major Thomas Lewis to arrest Major James White, of Tennessee—Summons for John Rogers and James Carey—Sitgreaves and Rogers—Letter from McHenry to Carey, and also to Colonel David Henly, Agent of the War Department at Knoxville—Order for arrest of James Grant—Report of Lewis to the Committee—Report of David Henly to the Secretary of War—Report of Hawkins to the Secretary of War—Comments on putting the examination of Carey in the hands of an enemy of Governor Blount.

Doc. A, commands Captain Eaton to arrest Nicholas Romayne, of New York, practitioner of medicine, and seize his papers.

Doc. B, instructs Captain Eaton to confer with Mr. Harrison, or, in his absence, some other person "as he may be addressed to."

Doc. C, is a letter from Mr. Pickering, Secretary of State, to Captain Eaton, stating that there is presumptive evidence against Romayne of his being connected with William Blount in a conspiracy, and instructing him to apply to Richard Harrison, Esq., attorney for the District of New York, or, in his absence, to Josiah Ogden Hoffman, Esq., Attorney-General of that State, and to do what they, or either of them, may direct. In the event that he is not able to see either of these gentlemen he is instructed to take the advice of Colonel Hamilton or Governor Jay.

Doc. D, is a letter from Mr. Pickering introducing Captain Eaton to Harrison and Hoffman, and asking them to give him assistance.

Doc. E, is a letter from Eaton to Chairman Sitgreaves, stating that he had arrested Romayne and seized some of his papers; that Romayne appeared to be expecting a search; that he was much confused on the discovery of a letter to him from Mr. Liston, the British Minister. Eaton thought some recent and important letters had been destroyed.

Doc. E, is a letter from Harrison to Pickering. Harrison had gone with Eaton to Romayne's house and assisted at the seizure

of his papers. He does not seem to think there is much in Romayne's papers, for he says: "I sincerely wish that measures had been taken with regard to this business before the publicity of the proceedings against Governor Blount had excited alarm. It is probable that more important discoveries might then have been made. I still hope that they may result from a personal examination of the prisoner, though I do not believe it is to be expected."

Doc. F, is a certificate from Chairman Sitgreaves that Romayne having been examined and given bond for his appearance at the impeachment trial, is discharged.

Doc. G, is an order from the House Committee to Major Thomas Lewis to arrest Major James White, of Tennessee, and seize his papers.

Doc. H, is a summons for John Rogers, resident in the Cherokee Nation, to appear before the committee to testify in the matter and to bring what papers he had in his possession relating thereto.

Doc. I, is a summons from the Committee to James Carey to the same effect.

Doc. K, is a personal request from Sitgreaves to Rogers (officially summoned in Doc. H) to comply with the summons.

Doc. L, appears to be a request of the same nature from James McHenry, Secretary of War, to the same party.

Doc. M, is a letter from McHenry to James Carey, directing him to respect the summons of the Committee.

Doc. N, is a letter from McHenry to Colonel David Henly, agent of the War Department at Knoxville, directing him to give all the aid in his power to see the processes of the Committee executed in Tennessee.

Doc. O, is an order from the Committee to Lewis to proceed to Knoxville and arrest James Grant and seize his papers.

Doc. P, is a report from Lewis to the Committee, stating that he had arrived at Germantown, September 25, 1797, with Grant and Carey.

Doc. Q, is a report from David Henly to the Secretary of War, stating general progress.

Doc. R, is a report from Hawkins to the Secretary of War. Hawkins had examined Carey. He writes:

"When I first examined Carey, I did it alone; he was much alarmed. I assured him all I wanted was the truth, and that if he was faithful to the Government he had nothing to fear, and the proof I required of his fidelity was a disclosure of all he knew

relative to the contents of the letter, and that no part of his narrative should militate against himself, or affect his present standing with the Government. He communicated to me all that he said he knew. I replied that as I was not satisfied with his examination, that I gave him until the next day to recollect himself, and then I would examine him again. This I did as detailed to you. Notwithstanding the answers of Carey do not correspond with the expectations which naturally arise from reading the letter, I am inclined to think they are substantially true.

The impropriety of putting the examination of Carey into the hands of an enemy of Governor Blount, and of allowing that enemy to conduct the examination *alone*, and to offer pardon and amnesty to the witness, is apparent to everyone. That Hawkins was an eager prosecutor is evident from his method with Carey, as above stated by himself; that he was a good hater of Governor Blount is evinced from the voluntary observations which he makes, and with which he winds up his report. He concludes:

“That a man who has acted in so high offices as the writer of the letter (Blount) has done, should so commit himself, must be attributed to a long series of base conduct, which seems to have bouyed him and his followers above shame. For a general idea into his conduct you have only to inspect into the records of your own office.”

CHAPTER IX.

Continuation of the Testimony—Order of Sitgreaves for Arrest of Mr. Mitchell—Letter from Sitgreaves to Mitchell—Denial of charge by Eaton—Letter from Committee to Eaton, and Eaton's Statement under Oath—Letter from Dr. N. Romayne to Governor Blount.

Doc. S, is an order from Sitgreaves to Lewis to arrest a Mr. Mitchell, of Tennessee. The letter containing this order says that Mitchell made an important communication to the Spanish Minister, D'Yrujo, that he, Mitchell, had received a letter from Chrisholm. Lewis is instructed to advise with Henly or Hawkins.

Doc. T, is a letter from Sitgreaves to Eaton, informing him that one John Phillips Ripley had been before the Committee and charged him, Eaton, with withholding information.

Doc. U, is a denial of the charge by Eaton.

Doc. V, is a letter from the Committee to Eaton, stating that one Thomas Odiorne had also appeared before the Committee and generally corroborated Ripley's statement.

The statements of Ripley and Odiorne had been made under oath, and the Committee instructed Eaton to make his statement under oath. He did so, and added the following letter, marked :

Doc. W.

SPRINGFIELD, Sept. 6, 1797.

SIR: I am this morning honored with your letter of the 1st inst.; mine of the 29th contains my answer to Mr. Ripley's deposition, but as it cannot be admitted as evidence, I unite my oath to the statement herewith enclosed. I felt astonished at the inconsistency of the letter signed "Robert Liston," found among Romayne's papers, with the explanation of the British Minister on the subject of the conspiracy presented in a billet to the Secretary of State. The letter made the same impression on Messrs. Harrison, Giles, and Benbridge, and, if I discerned accurately, the Committee were not otherwise impressed. My letter to Mr. Hodgdon on this subject is expressive of my feelings. That letter I read to Ripley and Odiorne, the former of whom had been a candidate for an Executive appointment under Government, and told me had experienced the friendship of Mr. Pickering; the latter was soliciting a place in some public office—both professedly friends to the Executive measures, and both had plighted their faith and honor to keep my confidence. I am informed by my

friend Byers, that both, in violation of that faith and honor, and of truth also, have since aggravated this information to the Spanish Minister. I knew the young men in embarrassed circumstances, but believed their honesty impregnable. Feeling for the disappointment of Ripley (for he had formed sanguine expectations) in not obtaining the consulship at Tripoli, I requested that he would accept a room and lodgings in my house, and the use of my library, to qualify himself for the practice of the law with an attorney who lives near me, and that he would use my name to obtain such credit as would be necessary in the prosecution of his studies, till the avails of business would enable him to refund his expenses. He did, with seeming gratitude, accept the offer, but has since passed through my neighborhood, I am told, without calling on me. I can no other way account for this neglect than by a conjecture that READY MONEY has diverted him from his resolutions, and this, indeed, is uncharitable; Mr. Odiorne has at least been a spectator in all these transactions, and has not less experienced my friendship. I would not, sir, ask your condescension to the perusal of these individual concerns, did they not tend to show the relation in which these deponents should consider themselves with me, and that, to a violation of good faith, they have added ingratitude.

“With great respect I have the honor to remain, sir, your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM EATON.”

Hon. Mr. Sitgreaves.

This letter, together with the three depositions referred to, are entirely collateral to the subject, but this little episode is interesting and pertinent as going to show, among other things, that applicants for public office were of the opinion that zeal in volunteering assistance in the prosecution of Governor Blount was a recommendation to Executive favor.

Doc. No. 1, is a letter from Blount to Romaine, stating: “I persevere in my determination respecting a certain business, as expressed to you in New York,” dated February 9, 1797.

Doc. No. 2, is a letter from Romaine to Blount. It relates principally to the war in Europe and money matters. It contains this remark: “I have reflected much, since you left me, respecting our plans to the Southward: and the more I think on them the more important they appear to me in their consequences.” Dated February 10, 1797.

CHAPTER X.

Continuation of the Testimony—Letters from Romaine to Blount and Blount to Romaine—Note from Anonymous sender of Romaine's Letter to Blount of March 15, 1797, to Mr. Pickering, written in the Spanish Language.

The next paper is Doc. No. 3, a letter from Romaine to Blount. He writes: "There are letters from Mr. K——; he writes with caution. The only thing he says is, that the Minister's mode for a loan is not popular; but the result shows that Mr. Pitt has gained his object." March 3, 1797.

Doc. 4, is a letter from Blount to Romaine, in which he expresses his purpose of going to England and wished to see Romaine. March 7, 1797.

Doc. No. 5, is a letter from Romaine to Blount. He says; "I have read Mr. Adams' speech. I expect the greatest part of his administration will consist of speeches and orations. I fear much that on Saturday commenced an era not very propitious to our country." March 8, 1797.

Doc. No. 6, is a letter from Romaine to Blount. He advises him to leave for England secretly. March 9, 1797.

Doc. No. 7, is a letter from Blount to Romaine. He says: "I shall certainly attempt to carry our plan into execution, and shall see you at New York, or some other convenient place, before my departure for Europe, early in May." March 11, 1797.

Doc. No. 8, is a letter from Romaine to Blount. He advises Blount a second time to make his departure for England secretly; not to appear engaged in any commercial or land speculations in ——, for the reason that it would be "of immense disadvantage if known in respect to your other business, as long as that is pending;" and also informs him that Mr. King has a personal dislike to him (Blount). March 11, 1797.

Doc. No. 9, is a letter from Romaine to Blount. It was received by Mr. Pickering, from an anonymous hand, on or about July 13. The letter in full is as follows:

"NEW YORK, *March 15, 1797.*

"MY DEAR SIR: I have this day received your letter of the 11th instant. I do not know that I shall write to you after the 23d on the subject we contemplate, because the utmost caution is neces-

sary for us both to observe. The great point is now decided, and will corroborate the opinions I gave you, that the war will go on; and you may depend it will, for some years, with a degree of acrimony and horror not to be described. This, then, is fixing one point in the state of things, if you and I can benefit ourselves and be at the same time of service to our fellow creatures, we ought to do it.

“I find that Hamilton and our politicians here are very averse to the French being in our neighborhood, and are equally so that there should be any change; I am very cautious and circumspect, but get all the opinions that I can. In our business we will have nothing but enemies here; therefore the utmost reserve is required. I shall give out that I mean to visit some of the States, and then sit down and practice physic here. I think that will kill all suspicion about my being engaged in any political matters. In my last letter I gave you some ideas about King, and of not being seen in any business in a certain place, so as to appear a pure, dignified political character. Let me know if these letters have reached ——. I never was so confident of success in my life of any business as I am in this of our contemplation.

“I wish to impress on your mind very much the idea of secrecy in our business, and not confide in any one, for it may be of material disadvantage to us. This, perhaps, may be of moment for you to consider, that every means should be used in the Tennessee, Kentucky, &c., to give every assurance that a certain country is certainly ceded to France. That of course all properties in these countries will be of no value, as it will be in the neighborhood of a hostile, warlike people, who will favor the liberation of all the slaves. As landed property must fall in these United States, it is well to give it this turn among the Western people; it will be well to say that the mouth of a certain river will be shut against all Americans. It might answer to get some meetings of the people to instruct Congress against the French getting the Spanish cession, &c. You may inflame the minds of the people in a certain way, so as not to let out any of our plan, and yet put things in such a situation as will make our plan, when it takes place, appear as a salvation of the people, or, as “Common Sense” was in 1776; for ground must be prepared before seed will bear properly; all the fermentation you can make to the Southward, respecting the change of possession, &c., the better; when it is in your hands it will be well done. With respect to the United States, we are to be [——] upon and degraded, or I am deceived.

If any new ideas should occur, I will write to you again ; in the meantime we have no time to lose. You must positively be all expedition ; I am fearful you will hardly have time to visit the Tennessee, and yet it may be very necessary.

Adieu : God bless you and preserve you wherever you be.

Your affectionate friend,

NICOLAS ROMAYNE.

The Hon. William Blount,

Senate of the U. S., Philadelphia.

What do you think of my writing certain pieces for the Knoxville Gazette, &c.? Burn or destroy my letters.

Doc. No. 9 A, is a note from the anonymous sender of the foregoing letter, in the Spanish language, to Mr. Pickering, stating that the letter enclosed fell into his hands by accident.

Doc. No. 10, is a letter from Governor Blount, presumably to Dr. Romaine, for the address is wanting. He says : " I can only repeat to you that it might be well in you to advocate the Spaniards holding their present possessions, as most advantageous to the Western people, and committees or meetings ought to be held to request Congress to take the business in hand, and remonstrate against the French people, that if they do get possession they will oblige the Western people to come into all their measures and caprices, or they will shut up the navigation ; they will sow discord among the people, and the value of lands and all property will be greatly reduced." The letter goes on to state that the time is short—not more than six weeks—in which something must be done. It concludes : " At any event, we must meet the beginning of May, and then determine. Keep yourself prepared to go, and I will do the same." March 17, 1797.

CHAPTER XI.

Continuation of the Testimony—Letter from John Crisholm to Governor Blount, March 17, 1797—Letter from Crisholm to McKee—Crisholm to Rogers—Letters from Dr. Romaine to Governor Blount—Blount to Rogers—Blount to Carey—Blount to Loneley—Letter from Mr. Liston, the British Minister, to Dr. Romaine, April 28, 1797—Letter of James Grant to Governor Blount—Romaine to Blount—James Grant to Governor Blount.

Doc. No. 11, is a letter from John Crisholm to Governor Blount, dated March 17, 1797, in which he states that he sails for Europe the next day.

Doc. No. 11 A, is a letter from Crisholm to Col. John McKee, announcing the same.

Doc. No. 11 B, is a letter from Crisholm to Captain John Rogers, announcing the same.

Doc. No. 12, is a letter from Dr. Romaine to Governor Blount, expressing great confidence in the success of the enterprise, and stating that he was ready to set out for Europe, if Governor Blount should approve of his going. March 21, 1797.

Doc. No. 13, is a duplicate of the foregoing, sent for fear the former may have miscarried. March 22, 1797.

Doc. No. 14, is the Carey letter, already given.

Doc. No. 15, is a letter from Blount to John Rogers, telling him to "keep things in a train but take care and act wisely." April 21, 1797.

Doc. No. 16, is a letter from Blount to Carey, instructing him to pay James King the money due him (Blount) for some cattle. April 24, 1797.

Doc. No. 17, is a letter from Blount to Major Loneley, instructing him to pay money to James King, his attorney in fact. April 24, 1797.

Doc. No. 18, is the letter from Mr. Liston, the British Minister, to Dr. Romaine. The following is a full copy :

PHILADELPHIA, April 28, 1797.

I am much indebted to you, sir, for your friendly letter of the 14th of this month, enclosing one from Mr. Pultency, whose good opinion gives me high satisfaction. (That letter is now returned.)

Taking it for granted that I understand to what business you allude, I could wish to have a full explanation of your sentiments on the subject; it may be done, I think, in writing; you may depend on secrecy and discretion on my part.

The general sketch of what has taken place here is, that a person came to me to make certain important propositions of enterprise, to which I listened, but said I had no power to act.

He appeared to be determined and active, though illiterate and unfit to assume command.

He urged to have my consent to go to Europe, to tell his own story, to which I consented (though with some hesitation), not thinking myself authorized to give a positive refusal.

It strikes me that if a person of confidence, with proper authority from home, were to accompany him to the scene of action, something might possibly be effected.

Information of every sort will be faithfully received.

N. B.—I have no intention of sending my secretary anywhere.

Believe me with great truth and regard, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

ROBERT LISTON.

Dr. Romaine.

Doc. No. 19, is an extract from a letter of James Grant to Governor Blount. Grant says it is reported and credited (whether true or not) that the British have invaded the Floridas and blocked up the Mississippi. May 8, 1797.

Doc. No. 20, is a letter from Dr. Romaine to Governor Blount, in which he says that he has two letters from Sir W. Pulteney on the subject of their business, but that there is nothing decisive. May 12, 1797.

Doc. No. 21, is a letter from Dr. Romaine to Governor Blount. The writer speaks of sailing for Europe the middle of the ensuing week, and expresses an earnest desire to see Governor Blount before he sets out. May 13, 1797.

Doc. No. 22, is a letter from Dr. Romaine to Governor Blount, informing him that the vessel had sailed, but that the writer did not go. May 23, 1797.

Doc. No. 23, is a letter from James Grant to Governor Blount. The following is a full copy:

KNOXVILLE, May 24, 1797.

DEAR SIR: Seven days ago I was with Carey at Tellico; handed him your letter No. 1, left with Colonel King, and urged his sending for R——; he will certainly do it.

The chiefs are calling out for their old friend, Governor Blount

and McKee; are much dissatisfied; say the new masters treat them niggardly. I am assured they will advise in their towns, and send on through South Carolina without the knowledge of the Commissioners.

The Broome has just come in from Pensacola, and says he saw the British land in West Florida with ordnance, &c.

Watts and Doublehead wish much to see you. Colonel Hawkins is gone to Cumberland. He neither stands well with the cits or Indians.

I am your humble servant,

JAMES GRANT.

The Hon. William Blount,

Senator, Congress, Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XII.

Continuation of the Testimony—Letters from Blount to Romaine, and the latter to Blount—Memoranda of forces on the Mississippi river—Circular letter from Governor Blount to his friends in the West—Letter of Governor Blount referred to in the Carey letter, dated July 26, 1797.

Doc. No. 24, is a letter from Governor Blount to Dr. Romaine, in which he acknowledges the receipt of several letters and excuses himself for not replying to them sooner. He expresses the high respect and esteem he has always entertained for Dr. Romaine since his first acquaintance with him. May 29, 1797.

Doc. No. 25, is a letter from Governor Blount to Dr. Romaine, in which he says he cannot go to New York, but wishes Romaine to come and see him in Philadelphia. May 31, 1797.

Doc. No. 26, is a letter from Dr. Romaine to Governor Blount, giving his views upon the war in Europe. June 2, 1797.

Doc. No. 27, is an unfinished letter from Dr. Romaine to Governor Blount, which contains the following :

“I think myself very fortunate that I did not go to Europe this spring. I am disposed to think the business is over now.” July 2, 1797.

This is the last letter in the correspondence between Governor Blount and Dr. Romaine.

Doc. No. 28, is a “Memoranda of forces on the Mississippi river,” found among Governor Blount’s papers, endorsed “Judge Turner.”

Doc. No. 29, is a circular letter from Governor Blount to his friends in the West. The “annexed copy of a letter” referred to is the “Carey” letter. The following is a full copy :

“PHILADELPHIA, July 26, 1797.

“SIR: The annexed is a copy of a letter with which it seems Mr. Byers, of Tellico Blockhouse, came express to this city, and delivered it about the 20th of June to the President, with whom and his executive council it remained until the 30th instant, when it was laid by him before both houses of Congress, with other papers.

“It is imputed to me, and has involved me in serious difficulties,

the extent of which I cannot at present foresee. They will, however, shortly be detailed to you.

“I ask you to examine it with attention, and determine for yourself if the contemplated plan, let whoever may be the author, had gone into effect, what would have been the result to the citizens of Tennessee, whose good it has ever been, and ever will be, my happiness to promote? I repeat, read and judge for yourself, regardless of popular clamor, which its publication has raised in this and other places, much to my injury. Shortly I will be in Tennessee. In the meantime,

“Believe me, very respectfully your obedient servant,

“WILLIAM BLOUNT.”

CHAPTER XIII.

Continuation of the Testimony—Deposition of Dr. Nicolas Romaine taken before the House Committee, May 15, 17, 18, 19, and 20, 1797.

Doc. A B, is the deposition of Dr. Nicolas Romaine, "aged thirty-nine years and upwards," taken before the House Committee, July 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 1797.

The following is the deposition, the interrogatories, and the answers, in full :

Dr. Nicolas Romaine, being sworn on the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, doth depose and say :

That he has been acquainted with William Blount since the year 1782, when he first came to this city as a member of Congress. Some time after he had occasion to correspond with him respecting some property belonging to the deponent in North Carolina. Upon that and various other subjects the correspondence between them had continued till very lately. While Mr. Blount was Governor of the Territory of the United States south of the Ohio, the deponent was requested by a friend to write to him, and to propose the solution of certain queries respecting the military lands on the Cumberland, in that Territory, for the purchase of which it was contemplated to form a company, and to propose to Mr. Blount to become a party. The proposition was accordingly made to him. Mr. Blount's answer to these queries and propositions was communicated by Captain Chisholm, at that time an entire stranger to the deponent, but whom Mr. Blount recommended as a proper person to be employed by the company as a purchasing agent. The plan, however, was wholly dropped on account of the person who proposed it going to Europe. Some time afterwards the deponent formed a resolution of paying a visit to Europe; which being known to Mr. Blount, a proposition originated between them that an attempt should be made there to form a company on the principles and for the purposes formerly mentioned, and to include Governor Blount and Captain Chisholm as partners. This happened previous to the 12th of July, 1795, on which day the deponent sailed for England. An agreement to this effect was made and formally executed; but from motives of jealousy, and apprehensions of the fall of lands on account of the

political events in Europe, no direct attempts were made to carry it into effect. The deponent, however, left maps and papers on the subject with certain persons of consideration in England, and was requested by them and some others to procure from the State of Tennessee a law for enabling them, as aliens, to hold lands. These persons contemplated to purchase lands as the price, circumstances, and their own convenience, should dictate. In case of their becoming purchasers, it was understood that Governor Blount and the deponent might be interested in the purchases, upon terms, however, which were not settled; and the propriety of the purchases was to depend, in a great measure, upon his opinion. On his arrival in this country he was to keep up a correspondence with them, which he has done.

In October last the deponent arrived in America. He has not been out of the State of New York since, till he was summoned to this place. Soon after his arrival he wrote to Governor Blount, informing him that he had done nothing in their land business, more than has been before mentioned. To this letter he never received any answer; but, about the beginning of February last Governor Blount came to New York on business of his own; at least his coming was not at the instance or with the privity of the deponent. During his stay there, he and the deponent frequently met as acquaintances, had much political conversation, and frequently conversed on the value of property in the United States, particularly landed property. It seemed to be his wish that deponent should urge his friends in Europe to become purchasers of land at that time, which, however, he positively declined, on account of what he considered to be the political state of this country. He particularly stated to Governor Blount that the French Government was at that time very hostile to the Government of the United States; that in his opinion, there was no probability that General Pinckney would be received as Minister of the United States; that this opinion was founded on a knowledge of what appeared to be the system and temper of France when he came from there in July last: that he had much reason to believe that Spain had made a cession to France of Louisiana and the Floridas: that the French, possessing great powers, had great views in all their operations, and that he thought it not improbable they had in contemplation the acquisition of Canada and the whole Western country; and that he and his friends might be prepared to think of becoming *sans culottes*.

Mr. Blount seemed to be much interested by this conversation,

which was very extensive, and which became at length more particularly directed to the State of Tennessee, and the manner in which it might be effected by these events. He said he had taken great pains to settle that State, and to render it important. He spoke of his being concerned in administering the government there, on the subject of which he said he had been treated very ill by the President, or some of the Executive officers of the United States. The conversation, indeed, became so affecting to him that he wept; upon which the subject was dropped for that time. His stay at New York was several days; he was out at the house of the deponent one or two nights, and there were frequent conversations on the same subject; in the course of which the deponent expressed his opinion that, under present circumstances, the lands in Tennessee and in the Western country, in general, would be of little or no value. A remark was made, that in case of a war between the United States and France, the situation of the Western country must be very disagreeable; and that in such an event, those people, in order to relieve themselves from the calamities which must appear so threatening, would perhaps be impelled to separate from the Government of the United States. Speaking of the Genesee lands in the State of New York, and of some sales of them lately made abroad, and comparing them with the price of lands in Tennessee, the deponent was led to remark that it was a pity Louisiana also, as well as Canada, could not be in the hands of the English, as neighborhood to that Government added so much to the value in the sale of lands. Mr. Blount replied that he had no doubt of the justness of the observation; that it was indeed to be regretted that the British did not possess Louisiana, and that such an event might very easily be brought about. The deponents expressed some doubts of this opinion; having always understood that the people in the Western country were much attached to France and unfriendly to the English, which would create great obstacles to such an enterprise. Governor Blount admitted this, but remarked that the Spaniards were very weak, and would make but feeble resistance in that country. In consequence of this conversation, he proposed going to England on the subject. The deponent told him, if he chose to go, he would give him letters to persons who might introduce him to those in power. He then informed the deponent that Captain Chisholm and several others had a plan of doing something against some parts of Florida, about which they had been admitted to some interviews with a person of consequence in Philadelphia.

This was the first the deponent heard of Chisholm in this business, nor has he ever had any intercourse or communication with him relating to it. On his expressing a desire to know the nature and extent of Chisholm's plan, Governor Blount observed that he did not know it in its full extent himself, because Chisholm kept himself very much to himself; but he apprehended it to be some plundering party or petty enterprise. The deponent observed he was very sorry for this affair of Chisholm, and observed that it ought to be prevented. He also expressed much surprise that the person of consequence in Philadelphia, who had been alluded to, should see such a man as Chisholm on a business of that nature, and added that Governor Blount ought to see that person of consequence, and caution him against listening to such overtures from persons of that description. Mr. Blount observed that he had no acquaintance with that person, as he had never waited on him. The deponent then begged him to take care that Chisholm should be prevented from pressing his project; he replied that he could command Chisholm when near, but could not answer for or control him at a distance.

The conversation then turned, for the first time, on the Floridas, and the deponent observed that it was a matter of regret that they did not belong to the United States—mentioning, among other things, the inconvenience of having such great natural boundaries as the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico; that if he should go to England, he ought to impress this idea upon the people in power, and point out to them the favorable effect that their aiding such an event would have on the United States, to whom Florida was of great importance, while it could be of little value to England.

The deponent remarked, generally, that it was understood and agreed by Mr. Blount and himself, throughout the whole of their conversations on this subject, that the most favorable state of things for the United States was the possession of Louisiana by Spain; but if it were to pass from their hands, it was deemed by them of great importance that England should possess it rather than France.

With these general impressions Governor Blount left New York, that he should consult with some persons of importance in Philadelphia, both in the Government and out, and learn from them how far such a project might receive their approbation or countenance, or be deemed advisable by them; that he should also, for the same purpose, sound certain persons in Virginia, the frontiers

of North Carolina, the State of Tennessee, and generally throughout the Southern States, and the people in general in the State of Tennessee; that he should particularly attend to those persons in the Indian country and elsewhere who had been engaged in Genet's project. As they were already under operation they must be managed; and that the deponent should forward to Philadelphia such letters of introduction for Governor Blount, to persons in England, as might be thought useful. This the deponent engaged to do; and soon after wrote to a gentleman in England, informing him that a person of consequence would sail from this country, some time in May, for England, on a business of this kind.

After Governor Blount returned to Congress, several letters passed between him and the deponent on the same subject. In one of them he expressed the necessity of his standing well with the four Southern nations of Indians, and holding his importance among them. He also, in these letters, expressed his fears about the conduct of some persons in this country, who had contemplated this business and might attempt to execute it in an improper and imprudent manner. These considerations united, and some other matters not connected with them, induced the deponent to think of sailing for England in the month of May; before he set out, he expected to receive from Governor Blount full information of his opinions and the result of his inquiries, and for that purpose requested an interview, that there might be a full and free conversation on the whole business; to this he received no answer for some time, but learned from other persons that Mr. Blount was in Philadelphia. His neglect in this respect made the deponent hesitate, and the late change of circumstances in Europe made him doubt the success of the application to the British Government at this time; he had also received some further account of the force of the Spaniards in that quarter, and some information said to have come from a respectable foreigner who had been in that country, that there were in the Southern and Western parts of the United States large numbers of men, who it was likely would aid the French and Spaniards. These circumstances had determined the deponent to abandon this business altogether, when he received a letter from Mr. Blount, expressing his regard for him, and apologizing for not writing; and soon after another, requesting him to come to Philadelphia; to this the deponent did not consent, and then the intercourse on this subject ended, except that the deponent wrote a letter to Mr. Blount, expressing his opinion that the business was ended, to which he never received an answer.

INTERROGATORIES OF THE COMMITTEE AND ANSWERS
OF THE DEPONENT.

1. Who was the friend at whose request you wrote to William Blount, while Governor of the Southwestern Territory, about the purchase of military lands?

Answer. It was Mr. Edward Griswold, now resident in Paris.

2. You have said that articles of agreement were drawn up between you and William Blount, previously to your departure for Europe, in 1795. Were they executed, and what was their tenor?

A. They were executed, and are, I understand, in the possession of the Committee. They related solely to lands, and their tenor and contents may be discovered from a perusal.

3. How long did you remain in Europe, and in what part of it?

A. Something more than a year; during which time I visited first England, then Holland, France, and Belgium; from whence I returned to England, and after a short stay there, embarked for New York.

4. Who were the persons in whose hands you left certain maps and papers on your departure from England?

A. I left them with different persons. They were wholly of a private nature, and in no manner connected with the object of this examination.

5. Are you acquainted with Sir William Pulteney; and if you are, did your acquaintance with him commence before you visited England in 1795?

A. It did not. My acquaintance with him arose from letters from Mr. Williamson, in the Genesee country, to him, with which I was particularly charged. The personal delivery of those letters, which I understood to relate to private concerns, gave rise to conversation between us, and that led to a further acquaintance.

6. Were you acquainted, while in England, in 1795, with Lord Grenville, or with Mr. Dundas?

A. Not with Lord Grenville. With Mr. Dundas I had some acquaintance, having been introduced to him by a gentleman at whose house I met him at dinner. This gentleman afterwards carried me to breakfast with Mr. Dundas, whose desire of an acquaintance with me might have arisen from some sketches which I had written respecting this country, and which I believe were seen by him. This was all the acquaintance or intercourse I had with Mr. Dundas.

7. Did not these persons, or some, and which of them, in those conversations, express to you a desire to add Louisiana or the

Floridas, or both, to the British crown; and did you not hear this desire expressed by some other, and what persons of consideration in England?

A. I never heard such a wish expressed by those or any other persons in England.

8. Were you, while in Europe, requested by any, and what persons to sound the people of the United States on the subject of a plan to annex Florida or Louisiana, or both, to the British crown; or to make some propositions tending that way?

A. No such request or overtures were ever made to me. The plan originated between Mr. Blount and myself, as far as I know, in the manner stated by me in my deposition.

9. In your conversations in England with persons of consideration, was any mention made of a description of people in this country who wished to separate the Western settlements from the Union?

A. No mention of such persons was made to me by any persons whatever.

10. How long have you been acquainted with the British Minister in this country, and by what means did you come to know him?

A. I was introduced to him in London, by Mr. Pinckney, soon after his appointment to this country, and I paid him a visit and left some letters for America, of which he took charge. I have never seen him since his arrival in America.

11. On your return to this country, in 1796, you wrote to Governor Blount. Did you urge him to meet you in New York?

A. I did write to him, as stated in my deposition, and spoke of some private business; but I did not mention this subject, nor did I request him to come to New York. His arrival there in February was without my knowledge or privity, and, as I understood, for private business of his own.

12. To what persons in England or America have you written on the subject of this inquiry, since your return, and what answers have you received?

A. I have written to one person in England, a member of Parliament, but not of Administration; from whose answer it does not appear that the business was ever spoken of there by him. I also wrote to Governor Blount, and received answers; the purport and substance of which correspondence I have already explained. I likewise wrote to Mr. Liston, and, I believe, to no other person. Mr. Liston gave me an answer, which is now in the possession of the Committee.

13. What was the purport of your letter to Mr. Liston?

A. I have no copy of the letter, but I recollect its purport, which was to inform Mr. Liston that I had heard of a certain enterprise in contemplation, and on which he had been consulted, and to caution him against it, as a very delicate measure, requiring great circumspection, and capable, if known to be encouraged by him, of injuring the interests, both of this country and his own, which I was persuaded it was his wish to promote. I also hinted that a plan more extensive was contemplated by fitter persons: and having understood that he intended to send his secretary to some place on the business which had been mentioned to him, I strongly dissuaded him from this step; indeed, to do so had been one of my chief inducements to address him. In his answer, now in the possession of the Committee, he assured me that he had no intention of sending his secretary anywhere. I was induced to take this liberty with Mr. Liston from the manner in which I became acquainted with him, and the very favorable light in which he was presented in letters which I had received from England, and one of which I enclosed to him.

14. What was the project against which you cautioned Mr. Liston?

A. It was that of Chisholm, of which I had been informed by Governor Blount, and which the latter told me had been mentioned to the Minister.

15. What was the project to which you alluded as being in more proper hands? Did Mr. Liston know of it, or did you explain it to him?

A. It was that contemplated by Governor Blount and myself. Mr. Liston, as far as I know, and believe, had no knowledge of it, nor was it our intention to give him any. I did not think it proper for him to be acquainted with it; the intention being to apply, not to him, but to the British Government.

16. In your conversation with Governor Blount, at New York, you expressed your regret that Louisiana did not belong to England, since the value of lands in the Western country would, in that case, be increased; was this the first time you had contemplated or expressed that idea?

A. It was not. I had reflected on the idea before, but had never mentioned it verbally to any person; nor in writing, except once, and that was in a letter to a gentleman in England. This letter, however, merely stated the possession of those countries by England as a desirable thing.

17. What was the nature and object of the business contemplated between William Blount and you?

A. Nothing precise or definite had been agreed on. Much was to depend on the result of Governor Blount's inquiries and observations, upon which I never received any communication from him. But the general object was to prevent Louisiana and the Floridas from passing into the hands of France, pursuant to the supposed cession by Spain; and to make propositions to the British Government in that view.

18. What were the propositions intended to be made to the British Government?

A. On this head, also, nothing definite had been agreed upon. Had Governor Blount gone to England, he would of course have proposed his own terms; had I gone, I should have received his instructions. This would have been settled in the interview which I proposed between us, had it taken place. Had I gone without seeing him, I should have waited in England for letters from him on the subject.

19. Was it not understood that William Blount and yourself were to use your personal efforts and influence to prevent the supposed cession of Louisiana by Spain to France from being carried into effect?

A. This was certainly our object; and every means, both in this country and Europe, would, of course, have been employed by us for its accomplishment.

20. Was it not proposed that Great Britain should send a force into that country for this purpose?

A. To ascertain whether they would do this, was the express object of Governor Blount's intended visit to Europe.

21. Was it understood that, in case circumstances should require it, Governor Blount and his Western friends were to make active efforts in co-operation with the British forces which might be sent there?

A. When Governor Blount and myself parted at New York, the understanding between us was, that he should go to England. Nothing was then said, or has since passed between us, on the subject of this interrogatory; nor have I any direct knowledge of his views on that head.

22. What part were the Indians and Western people to act in this business; and in what manner were they to be used in its execution? Was a co-operation by force from the territories of the United States contemplated?

A. As to Indians, there was nothing particularly said about them, nor had I any idea of their being employed. To keep them quiet was all supposed to be intended, or advisable. The Western people, according to my view of the subject, were to be rendered favorable to the possession of the Floridas and Louisiana by the British, and disposed to emigrate there, and assist in holding the country, should the reduction take place. No co-operation of forces was mentioned by Governor Blount, nor have I any knowledge of his precise intentions as to either the Western people or the Indians. All this, as I understood the matter, was dependent on his observations and inquiries in the Western country, on which subject I have had no information from him.

23. What part was William Blount to bear in this business, and what advantage or emolument was it understood that he, and others who might favor or aid it, were to derive from its accomplishment?

A. I have no doubt that Governor Blount had high expectations of emolument and command, in case the project should succeed, but nothing definite on this subject was spoken of between him and me; and, from the nature of the business, everything must have depended on the arrangement to be made in London with the British Government.

24. Did William Blount ever apply to those persons of importance in and out of the Government whom it was agreed he should sound on this subject?

A. I do not know that he ever did apply to any of them. I had no information from him on this point.

25. In one of your letters to William Blount you urge the propriety of his appearing to have no connection with land schemes or commerce in——. What place was meant, and why was caution recommended?

A. England was the place meant, and the caution proceeded from an opinion in me, that the dignity and importance of character which it was desirable for Governor Blount to maintain in England, would be lessened by his appearing to be concerned in commerce or the sale of lands.

26. In another part of the correspondence between William Blount and yourself, you tell him that it would be proper to keep his business in England secret from Mr. King. What was the reason of this caution?

A. The reason is explained in the letter itself which contains the caution. It is possible that I may have had some further rea-

sons than are there expressed. But I have no accurate or perfect recollection on the subject.

27. In one of your letters to William Blount you mention a paper which you had drawn up on the subject of your business, to be left for him, in case you should sail for Europe without a personal interview, and which you wished him to possess, but do not choose to send. Where is that paper, and what were its purport and substance?

A. The only copy which now exists was sent by me to England, directed to myself some time in May or June. It contained a variety of notes, reflections, and cautions, relative to the business contemplated between me and Governor Blount, which had occurred to me after he left Philadelphia in the spring, on his return to Tennessee, but I cannot state the particulars. They were reflections which occurred to me at various times, when thinking on the subject, and were noted down as they occurred, to serve myself and Governor Blount as hints and memoranda in the progress of the business. One copy I sent to England for my own use when I should arrive there. Another I retained for Governor Blount, but afterwards destroyed when I conceived the business to be at an end. They were never seen by him.

28. Do you know any other matter or thing which, in your opinion, is material to the objects of this examination? If yea, declare it fully.

A. The foregoing depositions and answers contain all that I know on the subject; and, aided by the correspondence now in possession of the Committee, will, I presume, furnish them with every idea respecting it in my power to communicate.

NICOLAS ROMAYNE.

CHAPTER XIV.

Continuation of the Testimony—Deposition of William Davy—Letter from Thomas Davy, dated London, Sept. 13, 1797—Deposition of George Leshar.

Doc. C D, is the deposition of William Davy before the Committee, July 13, 1797. The following are the principal points:

Mr. Davy was interested in a vessel about to sail for London, but, as a security against capture, she was cleared for Hamburg. Of this fact Mr. Davy informed the British Minister, Mr. Liston. A few days after, Mr. Liston's secretary, Mr. Thornton, called on deponent and asked him to take a confidential person to England. Mr. Thornton told deponent that this person would carry despatches which would be leaded, so as to be sunk in case of capture; but he did not state the nature of the despatches. Mr. Davy consented to take the messenger. Some days after, the messenger arrived. He was a hardy, lusty, brawny, weather-beaten man. He conversed with Mr. Davy with the utmost freedom. He told him without reserve the object of his mission. He said that he was a back-countryman; that he had lived long among the Indians, and was with them during the last war; that he was well known to the Spaniards; that his name was Captain Chisholm; that he had been an interpreter to the Indians last winter in this city; that the Spaniards had frequently imprisoned and treated him cruelly in Pensacola; that they dreaded him, and he hated them, and was now determined to take his full revenge on them. He said that his influence was such with the Indians, that he could do with them as he pleased; that he knew every part of the Mississippi; that there was no man in America who knew the forts and their exact situation so well as himself, and that he was now going to London to accompany and conduct a squadron to the attack of Pensacola. The deponent was afraid of trusting such a person on his brig, and stated his fears to Chisholm. Chisholm stated that he was furnished with other papers to cover his designs, and showed to deponent a number of letters, unsealed, from Mr. Liston to persons in Hamburg, stating him to be a person going there on a land speculation. Chisholm also exhibited a letter from Mr. Liston for a person in London, whom the deponent supposed to be either one of the Under Secretaries of State or Mr. Liston's pri-

vate agent, calling him "the person of whom I have written to you relative to the land business." The brig was prevented from sailing on the day first intended, and Sunday, March 19th, was fixed positively for her sailing. Deponent was surprised to learn that Chisholm was still in town after the time fixed for sailing. He then went to Mr. Liston, informed him of his apprehensions and stated to him the imprudence of entrusting matters of importance to such a babler. He also stated to Mr. Liston that Chisholm had shown him his (Liston's) letters. Deponent and Mr. Liston started out to hunt up Chisholm that night. They found him at Leshers Tavern, corner of Second and Arch, vociferating among a crowd of Frenchmen. They called him out and expressed their surprise that he had not gone on the brig. Chisholm informed them that the vessel had not sailed. It was now between ten and eleven o'clock. Mr. Liston went home and deponent made further inquiries and ascertained that the vessel had not sailed. He returned to Mr. Liston with this information, and again warned him against Chisholm. Mr. Liston thereupon immediately wrote a letter to Mr. George Hammond, Under Secretary of State, which he read to Mr. Davy. It conveyed a caution against Chisholm. Mr. Liston told deponent that Chisholm had come to him with propositions upon which he had no power to act, but thought himself obliged to refer him to his Government. Soon after the vessel sailed. Mr. Liston paid for Chisholm's passage. Chisholm wrote letters to the deponent from the Capes. He was "thunderstruck" to receive an open letter from him directed to Governor Blount. Deponent read the letter and took it to Mr. Liston. It contained only in general terms the information that all was going on well. He sealed it and delivered it.

Doc. C D, No. 2, is an extract from a letter from Thomas Davy, London, Sept. 13, 1797, stating that Chisholm had arrived, and that he (Davy) had ascertained by inquiry made at Lord Grenville's office that his plan had not been acceded to, but that he had been liberally supplied with money.

Doc. E F, is the deposition before the House Committee of George Leshers, July 19, 1797.

Leshers was the keeper of the tavern where Messrs. Liston and Davy found Chisholm. Leshers says that Chisholm made the same exposure of his plans to him that he did to Davy. He states further that while Chisholm lodged at his house he was arrested for a debt of \$100, which Chisholm afterwards paid, as he alleged, by a note which he had received from Mr. Bond, the British Consul.

CHAPTER XV.

Continuation of the Testimony—Deposition of William Bell—Letter from Mr. Pickering, Secretary of State, to the House Committee.

Doc. G H, is the deposition of William Bell, July 27, 1797, taken before the Committee.

It was at Bell's suit that Chisholm had been arrested for the \$400 as stated in the last deposition. Bell says that "he never received from Chisholm any note or bill of Mr. Bond's in payment, nor did Chisholm ever mention Mr. Bond to the deponent at all."

Doc. I K, No. 11, is a letter from Mr. Pickering to the House Committee. It reads in full as follows :

" PHILADELPHIA, July 26, 1797.

"GENTLEMEN: In a note received from Mr. Harper, I was requested to put into writing, for the use of the Committee, the substance of my conversation with Mr. Liston, the British Minister, particularly that part which relates to the correspondence with Dr. Romayne. I give it as follows :

"When the Spanish Minister, the Chevalier D'yrujo, had formally expressed to me his suspicion that an expedition was preparing on the Lakes, on the part of the English, the object of which was to attack Upper Louisiana, I mentioned it to Mr. Liston. He instantly answered that he had no knowledge of any such preparations. I remarked that to me the project suggested did not bear the resemblance of probability ; that very great embarrassments must be encountered in transporting troops, cannon, stores, and provisions, from Canada to the Mississippi, and besides that the British had not in that country a force that was adequate to the execution of such a plan.

"At a subsequent period—I am inclined to think it was in the latter part of April, after the Spanish Minister had repeated his suspicion of an expedition intended from Canada against Upper Louisiana, and which I again mentioned to Mr. Liston, the latter again said that he had no knowledge of such a design. But he added that a proposal had been made to him of an expedition to the Southward, against the Spanish possessions, but which he had no power to authorize. And, as to General Clark, of Georgia, to whom the Spanish Minister said he certainly knew that proposi-

tions had been made by the British, relative to an attack on the Floridas, he (Mr. Liston) did not recollect ever to have heard of the man, and certainly that he had no knowledge of any such propositions.

“Mr. Liston has informed me that when he objected to the project of an expedition against the Spanish territories at the Southward, because, on the plan of the projector, it could not be attempted without violating the neutral rights of the United States, the projector answered, that the men going from the United States would march *unarmed*, and not take arms until they should be within the Spanish territory. When he told the projector that he (Mr. Liston) had no authority to institute such an expedition, he asked if the Governor or General commanding in Canada could not authorize it. To this Mr. Liston answered that the Governor doubtless possessed certain military powers, but he presumed that he would not think himself authorized to direct the execution of a plan of this kind; and all that he (Mr. Liston) could do would be to write to the British Government and await its answer, which indeed might be long in coming, or might not come at all, partly on account of the important objects which engaged its attention, and partly on account of the strong objections to the project itself. This was about the beginning of January last. The answer not arriving as soon as the eagerness of the projector expected, he became impatient, and was extremely pressing to go to England to obtain in person an answer from the British Government, to which, Mr. Liston said, he with much reluctance consented.

“I asked Mr. Liston if a trading scheme formed any part of the project which had been proposed to him. He answered in the affirmative.

“Governor Blount having, in his letter to Carey, expressed his doubts whether Chisholm was gone to England, I asked Mr. Liston of the fact. He answered that he was certainly gone; that he had embarked in a vessel for Philadelphia; that he (Mr. Liston) had paid for his passage; and that he had seen letters brought by the pilot, received from Chisholm when he was far down the Delaware, or at the Capes.

“Having learnt from the Committee, or some of its members, that they had received information that Chisholm had said that he discharged a debt for which he had become engaged (I think for Governor Blount) by making some sacrifices on a note or obligation from Mr. Bond, the British Consul, I mentioned the circumstance to Mr. Liston, who answered that he knew of no such

thing, and that he never communicated to Mr. Bond any information of the project in question. Afterwards (I believe on the second day) I met Mr. Liston, when he told me that he had mentioned to Mr. Bond the story of his note or obligation to Chisholm. Mr. Bond said he had never given either; that he had never paid him any money or even knew the name. As this story, however, tended to excite a suspicion that other moneys might have been paid to Chisholm by Mr. Liston, or by his directions, I asked him if he had ever paid anything to or for Chisholm besides his passage money. He answered that he had not; that even his passage-money was not paid into the hands of Chisholm, but to the master or owner of the vessel in which he embarked. But as Chisholm, on his arrival in London a perfect stranger, would need some money for his immediate support, he (Mr. Liston) gave him a draft on his banker for twenty pounds sterling; but whether this has been actually paid to him or not, Mr. Liston has not received information. And in his letter to Mr. Hammond concerning Chisholm's voyage, Mr. Liston said he had intimated the necessity of paying for his passage back to America; apologizing for permitting him to go to England by saying that the whole would be an expense of only about a hundred pounds. Mr. Liston added that these were all the moneys ever paid or promised by him to any person or persons concerned in the project in question.

“With respect to Dr. Romaine, Mr. Liston informed me that a day or two before he left London in March, 1796, he breakfasted with the American Minister, and found there Dr. Romaine, of New York, who was introduced to him by Mr. Pinckney. That this circumstance, with the Doctor's civility, and the strain of his conversation, led him to form a favorable opinion of his character. That he never saw him before, nor has since seen him. That he did not know of his return from Europe until towards the latter part of last April, and a few days after Chisholm had embarked for England, when with some surprise he received a letter from the Doctor, dated the 11th of that month.

“That in this letter the Doctor reminded him of their interview at Mr. Pinckney's, expressed his good wishes, and alluding, as it appeared to Mr. Liston, though in covered terms, to the project of an expedition to be undertaken with the aid of persons resident within the United States, and to certain matters that had been discussed between the British Minister and some of the parties, mentioned the delicacy of Mr. Liston's situation, cautioned

him against interfering in a business that could not, with propriety, be patronized by a person in a public character, and particularly put him upon his guard against certain men who had made application to him upon the subject, and who, the Doctor said, were not to be trusted. That Dr. Romaine named no one, but hinted that, if he had an opportunity of communicating with Mr. Liston, he might enter into further particulars.

“Mr. Liston said that, as he had already reasons to doubt the good faith of some of those who had come to talk with him on the business, he was still more apprehensive in consequence of the suspicion thrown out by Dr. Romaine, and had become anxious to draw from him further explanations, especially with regard to individuals.

“He therefore wrote the Doctor, on the 28th of April, the letter which is in the possession of the Committee, calculated, as he thought, for this purpose, as it was meant to inspire confidence by telling the truth. That the mention in the letter of sending a person of consequence to the scene of action, Mr. Liston said, was occasioned by a passage in the Doctor’s letter to him, in which he seemed particularly to dissuade from a step of this nature, falsely supposing that Mr. Liston had already taken some resolution in respect to it. Mr. Liston said that, concerning the sending of such a confidential person to be a necessary preliminary in case the project received attention in England, he stated this opinion, in a few words, to the Doctor, in the hope of inducing him to give his sentiments fully on that point. But that he (Mr. Liston) had been disappointed in the Doctor’s answer, which did not give the frank communication which he desired; that his style was still mysterious; that he seemed to have misunderstood what was written to him, and avoided entering into any detail. That Mr. Liston did not reply, and that here the correspondence ended.

“I have been enabled to detail so many particulars on this subject of Dr. Romaine’s correspondence by conversing with Mr. Liston again, since the Committee’s request was communicated to me by Mr. Harper. On my hinting to him the wish of the Committee, which I did immediately on receiving Mr. Sitgreaves’ letter of the 13th instant, to be possessed of Dr. Romaine’s letter to which Mr. Liston’s was an answer, he said it was destroyed.

“In the same letter the Committee expressed their desire to see Lord Grenville’s letter, which I informed them Mr. Liston had shown me, and intimated that a copy of it would be convenient. I have already shown you the original by Mr. Liston’s consent;

and I now enclose a copy, together with a copy of the note in which Mr. Liston sent it to me, to show under what reserve it was submitted, viz : That it should not be exhibited to prove the criminality of any of the persons concerned in the plan in question ; for which reason I have left a blank in the copy where the name of one of those persons was introduced.

“I return the original letter of April 28th, from Mr. Liston to Dr. Romaine, which was found among the papers of the latter.

“I am, gentlemen, very respectfully your obedient servant,
“TIMOTHY PICKERING.”

SAMUEL SITGREAVES, &c.,
Committee, &c.

CHAPTER XVI.

Continuation of the Testimony—Note from Mr. Liston which accompanied Lord Grenville's Letter—Lord Grenville's Letter, dated Downing Street, London, April 8, 1797—Depositions of George Turner, Elisha B. Hopkins, Dr. Charles Buxton, and John Franklin.

The following is the note from Mr. Liston which accompanied Lord Grenville's letter :

PHILADELPHIA, *July 15, 1797.*

R. Liston presents his compliments to Col. Pickering, Secretary of State :

I have the honor of enclosing, according to your desire, Lord Grenville's original despatch to me respecting the proposal for an attack on a part of the Spanish territories in North America ; and you have my leave to show it to the President, and to make what other use of its contents you may, in your discretion, judge expedient ; always with the reserve, which I am confident you will not think it improper I should put in, that it shall not be exhibited to prove the criminality of any of the persons concerned in the plan in question.

No. 6, is Lord Grenville's letter. It is as follows :

DOWNING STREET, *April 8, 1797.*

SIR: In answer to your despatches Nos. 2 and 3, I have to inform you that the proposal which has been made to you by Mr. ———, as mentioned in these despatches, for endeavoring to wrest the two Floridas from Spain, has been taken into consideration by His Majesty's confidential servants, but it has not been thought expedient to accede to it or to adopt any measures for carrying it into execution.

Without entering into a detail of the various considerations that have led to this decision, I think it merely necessary to observe that, exclusively of the inadequacy of the means to the end proposed, the two objections which have occurred to yourself, the necessity of employing the Indians, and the impropriety of originating within the United States any hostile expedition against a nation with which they are at peace, are of sufficient magnitude to counterbalance the advantages which are likely to result from the execution of such a plan.

I have, therefore, to signify to you the King's pleasure, that you take an early opportunity of informing Mr. ——— that you have submitted his design to His Majesty's Government, but that it has not been thought advisable to afford any assistance from this country towards carrying it into effect.

I am, with great truth and regard, sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

(Signed),

GRENVILLE.

ROBERT LISTON, Esq.

Doc. L M, is the deposition of George Turner before the Committee, September 5, 1797.

Deponent states that Governor Blount made inquiries of him relative to the Spanish force on the Mississippi, and that part of the information he gave him is contained in the paper marked "Memoranda of Force," endorsed "Judge Turner," and in possession of the Committee.

Doc. N O, is the deposition of Elisha B. Hopkins before the Committee, July 14, 1797 :

The deponent said that he was in the habit of being at Governor Blount's boarding house every day. That on one occasion Chisholm took Blount out and they had some private conversation ; that on his returning Governor Blount asked deponent if he thought such a man as that should have address enough to introduce himself to the British Minister. Deponent said he thought his appearance and manners were against him. This took place during the last winter. In March, after deponent and Mr. Allison, the proprietor of the house, were in a room, when Chisholm and Blount came, and finding the room occupied, retired to an office in front of the house. Soon after, Governor Blount returned and said to deponent that that man (Chisholm) had so ingratiated himself with the British Minister as to have the promise of a lieutenant-colonel's commission, and that he was going to England. Deponent was afterwards informed by a friend that the news was that there was going to be an expedition against East Florida. Deponent wished to communicate his information to the Spanish Minister. He expressed this desire to one Richard Smyth, who said that he was intimate with the Minister. Nothing came of his effort to see the Spanish Minister. Deponent suspected Smyth, and also Colonel John McIntosh, as being connected with this expedition.

Doc. P Q, is the deposition before the Committee of Dr. Charles Buxton, July 20, 1797.

Deponent says that he had read a letter to Dr. Romaine, he thinks from Sir William Pulteney, in which Mr. Liston is mentioned, and the Doctor advised to consult with him, as the name of a Minister would have more weight in England than that of an individual. Romaine told deponent that he expected to acquire a large amount of land in the Western or Southern country, and promised deponent an advantageous appointment. This was in May. Deponent did not know what Dr. Romaine's plan was.

Doc. R S, is the deposition of John Franklin before the House Committee, September 2, 1797.

Deponent says that in December, 1796, he took lodgings at Leshers Tavern. That at the same time came also to the same house Captain Chisholm, with twenty-two Cherokee Indians; that Carey and Rogers were at the same house part of the winter. Deponent did not recollect the Christian names of Chisholm, Carey or Rogers. Chisholm complained that the Indians had been badly treated by the Government, and that he would not be surprised if they commenced hostilities on their return. Chisholm made the same exposure of his plans to deponent that he made to Davy and Leshers. The deponent understood from Chisholm that Governor Blount was in the plan.

CHAPTER XVII.

Continuation of the Testimony—The Examination of James Carey and the Deposition of James Carey taken before the Hon. John McNairy, Judge of the District of Tennessee.

Doc. T U, No. 1, is the examination of James Carey, in presence of Benjamin Hawkins, Colonel Henly, Mr. Dinsmoor, and Lieut. Wright, on the intercepted letter.

Question 1. How came you in possession of the letter from William Blount? Narrate the whole.

Answer 1. Major James Grant, about the 20th of May, being at the public store, informed me he had a letter for me from my friend Governor Blount, and he would deliver it to me. We went down to the creek side; he then delivered the letter, and when I read it I was uneasy. The hand was difficult to read; he said he would help me, and did so. I must remark that in putting me right he did so without reading after me, which surprised me, as I knew thereby he knew the contents.

Q. 2. "Among other things that I wished to see you about was the business that Captain Chisholm mentioned to the British Minister last winter in Philadelphia." What was this business? It appears by the manner this is written, you have a knowledge of it.

A. 2. Captain Chisholm did for awhile live with me in Philadelphia, but changed his lodgings; I was, after this, invited by Colonel Mentges to dine with him, and to take two Indians with me, which I did, Colonel Watts and Langley. After dinner we walked towards Schuylkill, and were overtaken in the street by Captain Chisholm in a coach; he invited us to ride with him; Colonel Mentges objected; but at length being prevailed on, we got into the coach, and road on to Schuylkill; there we drank a little wine. On the return, Mr. Chisholm pressed us again to go in the coach; we all did, except Colonel Mentges, who positively refused.

As we were going in the coach, Chisholm said he had been injured by the United States, and now he could have satisfaction; if they would go with him, he would show them at his lodgings a paper from the Minister of Great Britain. Upon our arrival there he opened a box and took out four or five sheets of gilt letter paper, close and well written, which he said was from the British Minister as he received it. Dick Brown and John Walker were

there. Chisholm proposed that we should go to the British Minister's; Carey refused and said the others might go; Watts refused and said he came to do business with the President of the United States, and not with the British; if his interpreter refused to, he would not go.

The paper was read, and it appeared to be a plan for the reduction of the Floridas. This was to be sent to England, and the return from the Minister, if it arrived at Philadelphia, was to be sent to Knoxville to Captain Chisholm, or, if he was not there, to Ig. Chisholm; that if the packet arrived to the Southward, it was to be sent up to the Cherokees to Captain Chisholm, and if he should be absent it was to be delivered to John Rogers. The paper was not signed, but there were the names of John Pitchlin and John Rogers in it; that he (Carey) spoke to Pitchlin since about it, and he said he had not heard anything about it, and Rogers said it was not worth minding Chisholm.

Q. 3. "I believe the plan then talked of will be attempted this fall." What was the plan then talked of?

A. 3. It appears to be the same as mentioned in the first question.

Q. 4. "If the Indians act their part, I have no doubt it will succeed." What part were the Indians to act?

A. 4. I cannot answer; but on the road I conjectured that it was to get the Indians to help the British, and I talked with Watts and Brown about it, and told them as much. Watts said Chisholm need not come into his nation with such talks; he would not take there. Carey said we lost enough already without meddling in such things. Chisholm tried to get Brown, who is his brother-in-law, to go with him to England, but Watts dissuaded him, and he declined it. Perhaps George Colbert can give some information; he was with us, and heard us talk the matter over on the road.

Q. 5. "You are, however, to understand that it is not quite certain the plan will be attempted, yet you will do well to keep things in a proper train for action, in case it should be attempted; and to do so will require all your management."

This paragraph shows that you have knowledge of the plan, and are to keep things in proper train for action, and that much reliance is had upon your management.

A. 5. Answered that this subject had never been understood by him.

Q. 6. You are advised to send for Rogers, and to speak to him yourself respecting the state and prospect of things.

This implies a certainty of your knowledge of the plan, and evidences a confidence in your co-operation?

A. 6. I have no knowledge of this.

Q. 7. "In short, you understand the subject, and must give out the proper talks, to keep up my consequence among the Creeks and Cherokees."

In this paragraph you understand the subject, and are relied on to keep up the consequence of the writer among the Creeks and Cherokees?

A. 7. Governor Blount requested me, before he left Knoxville, to keep up his name among the Indians, and not let them forget him.

Q. 8. After you saw Chisholm's communication, did you see Governor Blount and have any conversation on the subject with him?

A. 8. Yes. I visited the Governor, and, after some conversation, I asked him if he knew what Chisholm was about. He started up his head quickly and answered, "No; what you do mean? Damn the fellow, I do not know where he is; do you know anything about him?" I informed him of the paper; he asked if it was signed; I told him no; he then said, "It is not worth minding him, he is such a sort of a fellow; say nothing about what you have seen."

Q. 9. Did Grant deliver you any message from Mr. Rogers?

A. 9. Yes. He advised with me about getting the letter to Rogers; told me to seal it or send for him, whichever I thought best. I replied I would study upon it.

Q. 10. After the discovery of the letter, did any other person apply to you about the discovery?

A. 10. Yes. Colonel John McLelland came and asked me to walk, and inquired after it, and how it was got. I told him it was true it was got; he inquired after the cover; that, I told him, was safe. He said that the discovery was a terrible affair; you ought to have destroyed it. Charles McClung, General White, John and Samuel McLelland, came here, probably on the same subject; but Lieutenant Wright had enjoined it upon me to hold no conversation with any one, but in his presence. This I obeyed, and told McLelland of this order; that I was glad to see my friends, but could have no private conversation with them. I was ordered either to go over the river while they stayed, or be confined to the garrison; I obeyed, and went over the river.

Q. 11. What did you understand about the offer of whiskey to Watts from Governor Blount?

A. 11. The Quakers had spoken to Watts against drinking whiskey, and he disliked it and complained to the Secretary of War. The Secretary replied that this now depended with Colonel Hawkins; that afterwards we were at Governor Blount's, and Watts mentioned the subject to him in a style of complaint. Blount laughed and said, "Never mind it; when I come to Knoxville I will give you two kegs of whiskey."

Received the 3rd of August, 1797.

JAMES McHENRY.

Doc. T U, No. 2, is the deposition of James Carey, taken by the Hon. John McNairy, Judge of the District of Tennessee, in presence of David Henly, Benjamin Hawkins, Silas Dinsmoor, and James Byers, at Tellico, July 8th, 1797.

The deponent being duly sworn to make true answers to such questions as might be put to him relative to a letter signed "William Blount," and dated Col. King's Iron Works, April 21st, 1797, deposeth as follows :

Question 1. The letter being read, it was asked: How came you in possession of that letter from William Blount, addressed to you? Narrate the whole.

Answer. James Grant (called Major Grant), about the 20th of May, being at the public store, informed me he had a letter for me from my old friend Governor Blount, and he would deliver it to me. We walked down to the creek side, and there he delivered to me the letter. The hand was difficult to read, and my eyesight is defective; he said he would help me to read it, and did so, without looking at the letter, which made me know that he knew the contents.

Q. 2. Did Major Grant deliver you any message from Governor Blount?

A. Yes. He told me he was to advise with me about getting this letter to Rogers; told me to be cautious, to seal it, or send for him, whichever I thought best. He said people about here thought it was all over with Governor Blount, but he would rise yet; and if the plan in the letter took place, it would be a great thing for his friends. He added, I should get another letter from Governor Blount.

Q. 3. Did Major Grant say he would visit you again on the subject?

A. He said he would visit me again, I understood, on this subject, and he did come down here again.

Q. 4. Did Major Grant say anything to you relative to the contents of the letter on this visit?

A. Yes. He handed me a newspaper from Philadelphia, containing the speech of Doublehead, on receiving \$5,000 a year; I supposed for the purpose of circulating it through the nation. Major Grant and Lieutenant Davidson had some conversation relative to the speech, the purport not recollected. They two came over to the field where I was hoeing corn. I asked them to sit down under the shade, we remained there a short time, and returned—they on the horse-path and I on the foot-path, which was a small distance from each other. Lieutenant Wright arrived at the garison while we were on the other side of the river, and sent two soldiers after Lieutenant Davidson. On our return, the two officers were talking together, and Mr. Grant asked me what this bustle meant? He answered himself: I know; it was known at Knoxville I was going into the Indian Territory, and it is about me. What has become of the letter I gave you from Governor Blount? It is destroyed, I answered him. He then left the garison, and has not since been here, or sent any message to me. I recollect he said Mr. Byers was gone to Philadelphia, and that there was some stir or bustle about Knoxville, but he could not make head or tail of it; but it must be about his going into the nation. And he allowed that brought Mr. Wright, the lieutenant, down.

Q. 5. This is an extract from the intercepted letter: "Among other things I wished to have seen you about, was the business Captain Chisholm mentioned to the British Minister last winter, at Philadelphia." What was this business? It appears by the manner this is written, you have a knowledge of it.

A. Captain Chisholm did for awhile live with me in Philadelphia, but changed his lodgings. I was after this invited by Colonel Mentges to dine with him and take two Indians with me, which I did, Colonel John Watts and Langley. After dinner we walked towards Schuylkill, and were overtaken on the street by Captain Chisholm in a coach; he invited us to ride with him. Colonel Mentges objected, but at length, being prevailed on, we got into the coach and rode on towards Schuylkill, and turned round to a tavern; there we drank a bottle of wine, and returned. Mr. Chisholm pressed us again to go into the coach; we all did except Colonel Mentges, who positively declined. As we were returning in the coach, Chisholm said he had been injured in the non-settlement of his accounts, or his business; and now, if it

cost him the last drop of blood, he would have satisfaction ; it was now in his power. If they would go with him, he would show them at his lodgings a paper from the British Minister. Upon our arrival there, he opened a box and took out four or five sheets of gilt paper, close and well written, which he said was from the British Minister ; he read it. Dick Brown and John Walker were there. Chisholm proposed that we should go to the British Minister's. I refused, and said I had no business with him ; that the Indians might go, if they chose. Watts refused, and said he came to do business with the President, and not with the British. If his interpreter refused to go, he would not go. The paper was read, and it appeared to be a plan for the reduction of the Floridas. This was to be sent to England to the British Ministry there and to whom from the Ministry, if it arrived at Philadelphia, was to be sent to Knoxville to Captain Chisholm, or, if he was not there, to Ig. Chisholm, the Captain's son. That if the packet arrived to the Southward, in the Floridas, it was to be sent up to the Cherokees, to Captain Chisholm, and if he be absent, it was to be delivered to John Rogers. The bearer was to say he was going into the nation for his health. The paper was not signed, but there were the names of John Rogers, John Pitchlin, Captain Chisholm, and Ig. Chisholm in it. That I spoke to Pitchlin since on the road about it, and he said he had not heard anything of it. I spoke also to Rogers ; he said it was not worth minding Chisholm.

Q. 6. "If the Indians act their part, I have no doubt it will succeed." What part were the Indians to act?

A. I cannot say ; but on the road I conjectured it was to get the Indians to help the British ; and I talked with Watts and Brown about it, and told them as much. Watts said Chisholm need not come into the nation with such talks—he would not take there. I said we had lost enough already, without meddling in such things. Chisholm tried to get Brown, who is the brother of his Indian wife, to go with him to England. But Watts dissuaded him, and he declined it.

Q. 7. "I believe the plan then talked of will be attempted next fall. You are, however, to understand that it is not quite certain the plan will be attempted, yet you will do well to keep things in a proper train for action, in case it should be attempted, and to do so will require all your management."

This paragraph shows that you have knowledge of the plan, and are to keep things in proper train for action ; this shows that you are a confidant in the business, and that much reliance is had on your management.

A. This subject has never been mentioned to me, except as answered in the 5th question, and the answer to that question discloses what I know.

Q. 8. You were advised to send for Rogers, and speak to him yourself respecting the state and prospect of things. This implies a certainty of your knowledge of the plan and evidences a confidence in your co-operation.

A. I have no other knowledge of the plan than what I have communicated.

Q. 9. "In short, you understand the subject, and must give out the proper talks, to keep up my consequence with the Creeks and Cherokees." Have you any knowledge of the meaning of this paragraph, and have you ever been applied to, to keep up the consequence of Gov. Blount among the Indians?

A. Gov. Blount requested me before he left Knoxville to keep up his name among the Indians and not let them forget him.

Q. 10. After you saw Captain Chisholm's communication, did you see Gov. Blount and have any conversation with him on the subject?

A. Yes. I visited the Governor, and after some conversation, he asked me if I knew what Chisholm was about; damn the fellow, I do not know where he is. Do you know anything about him? I answered, yes; and told him he had changed his lodgings, and where he then lived. I then asked Gov. Blount what it was that Chisholm was upon with the British Minister. He started up his head quickly, and answered, no; what do you mean? I informed him of the paper shown to me by Chisholm. He asked me if it was signed? I told him, no. He said it was not worth minding him, he is such a sort of a fellow; say nothing about what you have seen.

Q. 11. After the discovery of the letter, did any person apply to you about the discovery?

A. Yes. Col. John McLellan came here, and asked me to walk, and inquired after the letter I had received from Gov. Blount, and whether it was got? He then inquired after the cover, whether they got that? I told him the cover was safe. He said, "the discovery was a terrible affair. You ought to have destroyed the letter. It was, or would be, the best plan that ever was adopted for the benefit of the country. I will try to support Gov. Blount's character in this country. I have heard Byers and the letter were gone to Philadelphia." Charles McClung, Gen. White, John and Samuel McLellan, and Willie Blount came here some days after

the foregoing conversation with Col. John McLellan, probably on the same subject. But Lieutenant Wright had enjoined it on me to hold no conversation with any one, but in his presence. This order I obeyed, and told Col. John McLellan of this order; that I was glad to see my friends, but could have no private conversation with them. I was ordered also by Lieutenant Wright, either to go over the river while the gentlemen stayed, or be confined to the garrison. I obeyed, and went, by permission, over the river.

Q. 12. What did you understand by the offer of whiskey to Col. Watts by Gov. Blount?

A. The Quakers had spoken to Watts against drinking, and he disliked it, and complained to the Secretary of War. The Secretary replied, this now depended with Col. Hawkins. That after this we were at Gov. Blounts, and Watts mentioned the subject to him in a style of complaint. Gov. Blount laughed and said never mind it; when I come to Knoxville I will send for you, and give you two kegs of whiskey.

JAMES CAREY.

Sworn before me on the 8th day of July, 1797.

JOHN McNAIRY,
Judge of the District of Tennessee.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Continuation of the Testimony—Depositions of Wm. L. Loveley—Deposition of James Carey, taken before the House Committee, September 29, 1797.

Doc. T. W., No. 3, is the Deposition of William L. Loveley, taken at Tellico, before Judge McNairy, July 8, 1797.

He says that when Carey showed him the letter before he delivered it up he seemed uneasy about it. He says that Carey had told him before the receipt of the letter from Gov. Blount, that Chisholm had been with the British Minister while in Philadelphia, on a plan for the reduction of the Floridas, and wanted to get the co-operation of the Indians.

Doc. T. U., No. 4, is the Deposition of James Carey, taken before the House Committee, September 29, 1797.

Carey deposes:

I am interpreter for the United States to the Cherokee Nation of Indians, and assistant at the public store established at the Tellico Blockhouse, and I reside there at present. For these offices I receive the annual salary of three hundred dollars, besides my board, from the Government of the United States.

I attended the Cherokees on their visit to Philadelphia last winter, and one day, about the last of December, or beginning of January, was invited, with two of the chiefs, John Watts and John Langley, to dine with Col. Mentges. After dinner, Col. Mentges proposed to us to take a walk to the Schuylkill; Captain Chisholm overtook us in a coach, and invited us to ride with him, which invitation we accepted after a little hesitation. We stopped at a tavern in the neighborhood of the city, and, after taking some wine, we all returned in the carriage with Captain Chisholm, except Col. Mentges, who preferred walking. After Col. Mentges left us, and on our way home, Chisholm began a conversation with me, which, at his request, I repeated to the Indians who were with us. He said that he had great power in his hands, that he was going to England, and should return and take the Floridas. As I knew him to be a rattling, boasting kind of a man, I laughed at him, and did not much regard what he said. He then told me, if I would not believe him, he would show it to me in writing. Accordingly, when we returned to our lodgings, he took out of

his trunk four, or five, or six sheets of gilt paper, the whole of which was filled with writing in a very pretty hand; this he said he had received from the British Minister, and read to me with such rapidity that I could not distinctly understand it. It had neither signature, direction, or address, but purported to be a plan for the reduction of the Floridas by a British and Indian force, of which, however, I do not recollect the particulars. It did not specify the number of men or ships that were to be engaged in the expedition; Gov. Blount's name was nowhere mentioned in it, nor did it contain the names of any persons or parties or associates in the project, or who were to be desired to join in it; nor do I remember that it proposed at all to engage any citizens of the United States in the enterprise, or to raise any force for the purpose within the United States. Chisholm was styled "Captain" in the paper, and was to go to England to the British Ministry with it, or, if he did not go himself, the paper was to be sent there, and the answer was to be returned to the British Minister at Philadelphia. If Chisholm should not be in Philadelphia when the answer was received, it was to be forwarded by land to Knoxville to him, or, in his absence, to his son, Ig. Chisholm, who was to send it to the Cherokee Nation to his father; or, if his father should not be there, to deliver it to John Rogers. If the answer should be sent round by the Floridas, it was, in like manner, to be forwarded to the Cherokee country to Captain Chisholm, or, in his absence, to John Rogers. This arrangement was contained in the paper. Chisholm himself said that he was going to England to get everything in preparation, and to procure from the Ministry, men and a naval armament; that the expedition was to come out in a large privateer; and that on their arrival in the Floridas, he was to obtain the assistance of the Indians, and then attack the Spanish. After Chisholm had read his paper and finished his story, I continued to laugh at him, and express my incredulity; whereupon he said if I still would not believe him, I should go with him to the British Minister the next morning, and take the Indians with me. I told him I had no business with the British Minister, and declined going, and so did the Indians.

Two or three days afterwards, at the request of the widow of the Hanging Maw, I went to Gov. Blount's lodgings to ask for some money that he owed her. I found him engaged in writing, and alone. On my entrance, he said to me, "Carey, what in the devil has become of Chisholm; damn the fellow, where is he?" I replied that he had changed his lodgings. Being thus reminded

of Chisholm. I concluded to tell Gov. Blount what I had heard and seen. I said to him, therefore, "Governor, do you know what this business is that Carey is upon?" He instantly raised his head eagerly from the paper on which he was writing, and looking at me said, "No, no; what do you mean, Carey?" I then told him of my conversation with Chisholm, and of what Chisholm had shown me. When I mentioned the writing I had seen he again raised his head suddenly, and looking at me as before, asked me eagerly whether that writing was signed? I told him it was not, and then he said, "Pooh, pooh, Carey; you know what a windy, blasty fellow Chisholm is, and it is not worth while to take any more notice of it, or say anything about it."

I had at no time, before or afterwards, any other communication of any kind with Gov. Blount relative to this subject or any political plan or scheme, until I received from him the letter dated at Col. King's Iron Works, April 21, 1797, except that once, in the city of Philadelphia, last winter, he advised me not to be present at the running of the line, nor to have anything to do with it, as he said it would be a troublesome business, and might occasion the Indians to reflect on me.

In a short time after these occurrences, I left the city of Philadelphia with the Indians. At Tellico I mentioned without reserve to Mr. Byers and other gentlemen there what Chisholm had said to me and shown me: they all seemed to treat the thing very lightly, and to consider Chisholm and his communications as equally unworthy of attention. I mentioned them also to John Rogers; told him how he was mentioned in the paper, and asked if he knew anything about it; he said he did not, and that such a fellow as Chisholm was not worth minding.

After my return to Tellico, on or about the 20th of May, I was told that James Grant, commonly called Major Grant, wanted to see me. When I met him, he told me he had a letter for me which he wished to deliver to me when we were by ourselves. We walked away together some distance, and then he said he had a letter for me from my old friend Gov. Blount. He delivered it to me, and, on opening it, I found within the same cover, two letters, one for John Rogers, dated, "Tennessee, Sullivan County, April 21, 1797, (Col. King's Iron Works)" the other for me, dated "Col. King's Iron Works, April 21, 1797," both of which letters are now in the possession of the committee. Without attending to the direction, I first opened that which was addressed to Rogers, and read down one side, which related to a runaway negro fellow,

before I discovered my mistake. I then began the letter which was directed to me. Major Grant and I were sitting within two or three feet of each other. I read loud enough to be heard by him, and, as I was sometimes at a loss to make out a word, being a poor scholar, he told me what it was, and explained to me and corrected me whenever I blundered as I went on. When I had finished reading it he said to me: "Now, Carey, you must be very careful, as your friend, Gov. Blount puts great confidence in you; you must observe what he tells you, that when you have read the letter two or three times you are to burn it." He then asked me what I intended to do; whether I would send the letter to Rogers, or send for Rogers to come to me. I told him I did not know; perhaps I might write to Rogers, and if I did I would let him know. He said that people thereabouts thought it all over with Gov. Blount, but he would rise yet; that if his plan should take place, it would be a great thing for the friends of the business and for the country; that Gov. Blount would entrust nobody with the letter but him, and that he came to Tellico on purpose to deliver it to me; that I should receive another letter from Gov. Blount, and that he, Major Grant, would come down again to see me on the subject. I then told him that I could not tarry there any longer, as I was wanted at the store. As we returned, he repeated to me that I should be careful, that the business was of great consequence, that it would be of much service to his friend, and that Gov. Blount placed great confidence in me. He then returned to Knoxville.

I kept the letter, but did not know what to do with it or think about it. I had, a few days before, been sworn by Mr. Dinsmoor, to execute my appointments with fidelity to the United States; and I was much embarrassed between my regard for Gov. Blount and what might possibly be my duty in respect to the letter. I consulted Mayor Lewis Loveley, who is clerk at the store, and showed him the letter. He told me he did not know what to advise, but that I should consider my oath. I took occasion, a few days afterwards, when I was alone with Mr. Byers, to tell him that I had a strange letter in my possession which I did not know what to do about. He asked me who it was from. I told him, and promised to show it to him the next morning, which I did accordingly; and, on his assurance that it was of importance to the public that it should be disclosed, I gave it to him.

After Byers had brought the letter to Philadelphia, Major Grant came again to Tellico. I was planting corn on the other side of

the river; he and Lieutenant Davidson came over to me. Major Grant took a newspaper out of his pocket, read it for me and gave it to me. It contained something about Doublehead's having been at Philadelphia with Gen. Knox and obtaining a greater indemnity for the Indian country than had ever been stipulated. Davidson and Grant entered into an argument about it; and then we returned to the Blockhouse, whither I wanted them to take a drink. They pursued the horse path and I went on the footpath at some distance from them. In a little while I was met by a soldier, who said there was an express come to the Blockhouse for Lieutenant Davidson and me, and then passed on to inform Davidson. A little further on I met another soldier, with a paper for Lieutenant Davidson, which was delivered to him as soon as he came up; and he then told us that Lieutenant Wright had come to the garrison. We crossed the river, and the two Lieutenants entered into discourse, and walked away by themselves. Grant then said to me, he believed he knew what all this bustle was about; that he had said at Knoxville that he was going into the Indian country, and he supposed Wright had come to stop him. He said also that there was a great stir at Knoxville about something, but he could not make out what. He asked me what I had done with the letter from Mr. Blount. I said it was *gone*, but did not tell him where, nor did he pursue the question further, but I thought looked very cool upon me. The officers soon returned, and Lieutenant Wright continued with me and Major Grant; and I afterwards understood that his business at Tellico was to follow Major Grant, and prevent him from having any private intercourse with me. Grant, immediately after taking a drink, left us and returned to Knoxville.

A few days afterwards, a Col. John McLellan, of Knoxville, came to Tellico, and called me out, and asked me if I had not received a letter from Gov. Blount. I said I had. He asked me what were the contents, and said there was a terrible to-do about it at Knoxville, and that it was reported that Byers had got it from me when I was drunk. I told him it was true that Byers had got it. He repeated his question about the contents. I told him I could not recollect them all. He said it was a damned bad thing that I had let it go. He then asked me if the cover was gone; I said I believed not. He then observed, that he supposed the letter was about something relative to Florida. I replied, I supposed it was. He said, he imagined it was to the same purpose as one which he had himself received from Gov. Blount; but that, by God! they

should not get that from him ; that he was determined to support Gov. Blount, and so were many others in that country.

Some days afterwards Charles McClure, General White, Willie Blount, and Colonel McLellan's brother came to Tellico also along with the Colonel ; but I was desired by Lieutenant Wright not to hold conversation with any of them except in his presence. I took, therefore, an early opportunity to mention to Colonel McLellan that I was glad to see my friends, but that I was not permitted to have any private discourse with them. Afterwards, they wanted me to go over the river with them to get fruit ; but I declined, telling them that I would go over and send them some by the Indians, but that I would not go with them.

The letter for John Rogers, which was indorsed in the same cover with that I received from Gov. Blount, I delivered to Col. Hawkins.

I never received the letter which is now produced to me, signed "William Blount," dated April 24, 1797, and in the handwriting of Gov. Blount and directed to "James Carey, Tellico Blockhouse—Col. King."

JAMES CAREY.

CHAPTER XIX.

Continuation of the Testimony—Deposition of John Rogers—Deposition of James Grant—Declaration made to the Minister of his Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, by Citizen Mitchell, a resident of Tennessee—Letter from Chisholm to Mitchell.

Doc. V. W. is the Deposition of John Rogers, taken before the House Committee' September 29, 1797.

He never received the letter mentioned by Carey as inclosed to him. He resided in the Creek and Cherokee nations, but held no office or employment of any kind under the United States. Last winter at Philadelphia Chisholm told him he might make his fortune by going to England. Deponent asked how? Chisholm replied that England and Spain were about to be engaged in a war with each other and that England wished to engage the Southern Indians. I learned afterwards he had been speaking to some of the Indians on the same subject. He made no secret of his project, but talked of it in a very public manner. He never mentioned Gov. Blount's name in my hearing. His plan was, according to his own statement, to induce the British Government to send a force into Florida sufficient to garrison Pensacola, New Orleans, &c., and to protect the country against the Spaniards, after the people, assisted perhaps by the Indians, should have risen against them and thrown off their government. Deponent was little more than an absolute stranger to Gov. Blount. On one occasion the last winter was at Gov. Blount's house, and the Governor asked him what he thought of Chisholm's going to England. Deponent said he thought it idle talk and that Gov. Blount by his manner seemed to think the same. This was the only mention Gov. Blount ever made to him of Chisholm.

The Committee had read to Rogers the following passage from the letter entrusted to Carey for him, viz :

" I suppose you know that Captain Chisholm informed me of yours and his objects last winter at Philadelphia. I now tell you that I am induced to believe that plan will go into operation; and if it was, it will be attended with great success. You will do well to keep things in a train; but take care and act wisely."

The foregoing deposition was in answer to the question, what the deponent knew about this matter.

Doc. X. Y. is the Deposition of James Grant, taken before the House Committee, September 29, 1797.

In April last deponent met Governor Blount in Washington County, Virginia, deponent was returning to his home in Knoxville from Hillsboro, N. C. Among other matters talked of Gov. Blount told deponent there was a plan respecting which Chisholm and several of the chiefs had been to see the British Minister last winter in Philadelphia." He (Blount) stated this plan to be "a co-operation of the Indians with the British in taking the Floridas, and establishing a British government in the Spanish dominions on the Mississippi, which, he conceived, would be of great utility to the Western country. He said if the plan should go forward, he should be engaged in it; that he was to use his influence to bring the Indians to act their part, and to conduct them as their military leader on the expedition; and that he was to be rewarded by some high official situation in the government of the conquered country. He made no direct overture for me to join in the enterprise; but said, that if he succeeded, he should have it in his power to handsomely reward his friends." Deponent says, "I understood generally from him that any citizens of the United States who would engage in the enterprise as volunteers should be received and employed." With regard to details, the Governor told deponent no more than that "a naval armament was to be sent from Great Britain, which was to bring out the materials for the enterprise, and which was to be co-operated with on the land side, under his direction, by the Indians and such other force as he could engage for the purpose. He spoke of it as an affair not yet matured, but which depended on preliminary circumstances yet to be arranged." On or about May 15, following, as deponent was going from Knoxville to Tellico, Col. James King requested him to take down some letters. One of these was the "Carey letter." He delivered the letter and was present when it was read, but did not read it or hear it read; he helped Carey when at a loss about a word. When Carey had finished reading it he said, "Yes, I understand it, and will pay attention to it."

Doc. A B C is "A copy of a declaration made to the Minister of his Catholic Majesty by Citizen Mitchel, resident in Tennessee."

The declaration states that Chisholm had enrolled a thousand Tennesseans for the descent on the Spanish possessions; that he had made a trip through Louisiana and the Floridas and was engaging the Creeks and Cherokees in his enterprise; that he had a list of 1,500 English royalists of the Natchez who would take up

arms in the enterprise; that there was an expedition fitting out on the lakes of 500 troops of the line, 700 Canadian militia, and 2,000 Indians under the Chief Brent; that this expedition would descend the Illinois, attack St. Louis, New Madrid, and march upon Santa Fe; that Chisholm had procured six field pieces, which were placed on the Tennessee river in the hands of one of his agents; that the Americans were to rendezvous at Knoxville, July 1st; that Chisholm had gone to London under the authority of Mr. Liston to ask for money and vessels to execute this plan. This declaration was made at Philadelphia, July 12, 1797.

Doc. D E F is a letter from Chisholm to Messrs. Mitchel and Craig, as follows:

“PHILADELPHIA, March 17, 1797.

“*Messrs. Mitchel and Craig:*

“You will observe that it will be necessary for you to be in the State of Tennessee on the first day of July next, in order to perform what we have agreed upon. You may rely on every attention on my part, and everything that we have talked of shall be performed agreeable to the *existing plan*.

“I am, gentlemen, your very humble servant,

“JOHN CHISHOLM.”

The foregoing letter was enclosed with the “declaration” as an evidence that the declaration was true. The declaration is in the French language, and was made to the Chevalier D’Yrujo.

CHAPTER XX.

Continuation of the Testimony—Depositions of John Phillips Ripley—Thomas Odeone and Capt. Eaton—Note from the Spanish Minister indorsing statement of Gen. Elijah Clark, of Georgia, dated November 23, 1797—Comments on “Citizen Mitchel’s” statement—Statement of Gen. Clark—Letter from Attorney Harrison to Mr. Pinckney—Letter from N. Webster to Mr. Pinckney—Anonymous Letter signed H. M.—Letter from Mr. Sitgreaves to Mr. Pickering—Anonymous Letter from G. H. to Mr. Sitgreaves—Letter from Capt. Eaton—Letter from Wm. Wilcocks to Mr. Pickering—Anonymous letter from the “Argus”—Letter from Mr. Sitgreaves to Mr. Pickering, and reply—Letter from Mr. Pickering to Mr. Harrison and from Mr. Sitgreaves to Mr. Harrison—Letter from Mr. Harrison to Sitgreaves—Deposition of Abel Holden—Deposition of Gen. Clark—Continuation of the testimony—Letter from the Spanish Minister, the Chevalier D’Yrugo, to Mr. Sitgreaves—Letter from Mr. Ripley to Mr. Sitgreaves.

Doc. G H T is the deposition of John Phillips Ripley touching the collateral matter of Captain Eaton withholding information before alluded to. It is irrelevant, and no importance was attached to it by the Committee.

Doc. K L M is the deposition of Thomas Odeone upon the same matter, upon which the same remark is to be made.

Doc. N O P is the deposition of Captain Eaton, exonerating himself from these charges.

Doc. Q R S is a note from the Spanish Minister inclosing a statement made by Gov. Elijah Clark, of Georgia, November 23, 1797.

[To judge from the face of the record alone it would appear that the “declaration of citizen Mitchel,” was either a hoax practised upon the credulity of the Spanish Minister or a scheme to get money from him—for it seems he helped Ripley to money. Nobody could ever find out anything about Mitchel’s whereabouts, although he was partner in a commercial house. Not one of the “1,000 inhabitants of Tennessee” who had been enrolled could be discovered by Mr. Sitgreaves. The “1,500 English royalists of

Natchez" were one and all, alike invisible. Nobody ever saw the "six field pieces on the Tennessee River." No further light was ever thrown upon the expedition of "500 English troops of the line, 700 Canadian militia, and 2,000 Indians, under Brent," [That the Spanish Minister was a man of feeble judgment and easy to be imposed upon, appears from his conversation with Mr. Pickering about a hostile invasion of Louisiana from Canada.]

Doc. Q R S, No 2, is the statement of General Clark, that a proposition was made to him asking him if he would accept a salary of ten thousand dollars a year and join the British? This proposition was made "through a channel which bound me (him) to silence if not acquiesced in." He refused. August 9, 1797.

Doc. A a is a letter from Attorney Harrison to Mr. Pickering, the principal point in which is contained in the following sentence: "I am this moment informed that William Duer, formerly Assistant Secretary, is suspected of being privy to this transaction."

Doc. A b is a letter from N. Webster, Jr., to Mr. Pickering, in which he informs him that one Dr. Hicks told him that some person (not named) had told him (Hicks) that he (Hicks' informant) had conveyed letters from Romayne to the British Minister.

Doc. A c is an anonymous letter, signed H. M., written by some illiterate person (to judge from the incorrect spelling of common words) to Mr. Pickering, informing him that Col. Stevenson, of New York, is a bad man and a dangerous character. H. M. says he abuses Mr. Pickering and many other public officers, calling them rascals, scoundrels, and "*velous* this man is *despart*."

Doc. A d is a letter from Chairman Sitgreaves to Mr. Pickering, in which the "suspicion arising from H. M's letter against Col. Stevenson ought to be traced," also that "there are other names besides Mr. Harrison's letter to suppose that Mr. Duer had a pretty full knowledge of the project." He requests that Lord Granville's letter be sent to the Committee. July 13, 1797.

Doc. A e is an anonymous letter from G. H. to Mr. Sitgreaves, in which the writer says, "One Mitchel told me last winter that his partner knew everything, more than he did."

Doc. A f is a letter from Captain Eaton to Sitgreaves, stating that he had heard it remarked by a gentleman crossing the ferry at New York, that Dr. Romayne had said "the government of the United States was founded in rebellion and supported by faction, and that a *short time* would restore things in this country to the political order which existed before the Revolution." Also that it had transpired from some of B's confidants that he had said: "One year would make him governor of the Natchez."

Doc. A g is a letter from Wm. Wilcocks to Mr. Pickering, informing him that one Munson Day (or Dey) had told him that there was going to be an invasion of the Spanish territories; that a person had gone to England on the business; that he had his information from one Mitchel, and that Mitchel had authorized and pressed him to raise forty or fifty young men, all of whom would be rewarded.

Doc. A h is an anonymous letter in the "Argus" against Dr. Romaine asking him questions, which implied a conspiracy, but making no specific charges and stating no facts.

Doc. A i is a letter from Sitgreaves to Mr. Pickering stating that the anonymous newspaper article in the Argus ought to be tracked up.

Doc. A k is a letter from Pickering to Sitgreaves stating that he had written to Attorney Harrison relating to the suspicious against Duer and Stevenson but had not heard from him on the subject.

Doc. A l is the copy of a letter from Mr. Pickering to Mr. Harrison upon the same subject.

Doc. A m is a letter from Sitgreaves to Harrison instructing him to make inquiries of the printer of the "Argus" relative to the author of the anonymous letter in that paper, with a view to obtaining further information.

Doc. A n is a letter from Harrison to Sitgreaves, stating that he made inquiries respecting the anonymous publication, and had "no great authority upon which this communication rests."

Here follows a document not marked. It is the deposition of Abel Holden, Jr. He says that John Phillips Ripley, nephew to the President of Dartmouth College, had told him that he had received two hundred dollars from the Spanish Minister and expected to receive more; that Ripley had also said that he was to have had the consulship to Algiers, but that Captain Eaton interfered and prevented it.

The next document is the deposition of General Clark, of Georgia, March 27, 1798. He says:

In the month of May, 1797, William Carrick came to his house in Wilkes County, and talked of the existing war between France, Spain and England; that the day after his arrival he informed deponent that he was a British captain, then from Charleston, where he intended soon to return, by way of Savannah, and see Col. John McIntosh, and that he was authorized by the British Government to offer the deponent a salary of \$10,000 a year if he would engage in the British service against the Spaniards and

French. The proposition was oral. The scheme was not disclosed. The deponent declined the offer.

Doc. 1 is a letter from the Spanish Minister, D'Yrugo, to Mr. Sitgreaves, stating that he had never directly or indirectly given or offered to give in any way any money or other reward to John Phillips Ripley, January 19, 1798.

Doc. 2 is a letter from Ripley to Sitgreaves, dated January 19, 1798, stating that he applied to the Spanish Minister for money, who recommended him to Mr. Stoughton, the Spanish consul, who, loaned him sufficient money to relieve him from a pressing embarrassment.

CHAPTER XXI.

Comments on the Testimony—Report of the Committee on the Testimony.

The reader has now before him all the evidence taken by the committee relative to the suspicions and charges against Gov. Blount.

It will be observed that the prosecution was of the most vigorous character. It was instituted by Mr. President Adams. The Attorney-General lent active assistance; the Secretary of War was no less energetic; and Mr. Pickering, Secretary of State, was especially vigilant. Mr. Harrison, United States Attorney for New York, and Mr. Hoffman, Attorney General for that State, assisted; as did Col. Hamilton and Governor Jay. The Chevalier D'Yrugo supplemented their evidences with the arts peculiar to Spanish intrigue. Not only were all the officials of the Government on the side of the prosecution, but all who hoped for office under Executive favor, contributed to swell the volume of popular clamor. And, finally, the watchful Sitgreaves did not suffer even an anonymous communication or an abusive newspaper article to remain untraced. No one will doubt for a moment that the committee prosecuted with vigor—with remarkable vigor.

Upon this evidence the committee made the following report to the House of Representatives, December 4,-5, 1797.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, *November 30, 1797.*

The Committee, appointed on the 8th day of July last, to prepare and report articles of impeachment against William Blount, a Senator of the United States, impeached by this House, of high crimes and misdemeanors; which Committee, by a resolution of the 10th day of July last, were authorized to sit during the recess of Congress, and were instructed to inquire, and, by all lawful means, to discover the whole nature and extent of the offence whereof the said William Blount stands impeached, and who are the parties and associates therein, make, in pursuance of the latter resolution, the following report:

The committee having charged themselves with the business to which they were appointed by this House, received, on the 8th day of July, from JAMES ROSS, Esq., chairman of a committee of the Senate, a trunk belonging to William Blount, containing a number of papers, which had been seized in pursuance of a resolution of the Senate, authorizing its committee to send for persons

and for papers. From these papers a selection has been made by the committee of the Senate; and the House, having made a further selection of such as appeared to them to be connected with the object of their appointment, returned the residue to the order of William Blount. The papers retained by the committee are in the Appendix to this report marked, Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28.

A violent presumption having arisen, from the inspection of the papers referred to, that Nicolas Romaine, of the State of New York, was intimately connected with William Blount in his criminal designs, the committee conceived it to be their duty to exercise the powers vested in them by this House, in such manner as to prevent the escape of the said Nicolas Romaine, and effectually to secure his person and papers for examination; they issued, therefore, on the 9th day of July, the warrant in the Appendix, marked (A); and, as it was deemed important to commit the execution of this warrant to a person of intelligence, discretion, and fidelity, the Secretary of State was requested to provide a messenger of competent character for the occasion. With a very prompt attention to the wishes of the committee, he assigned this service to Captain William Eaton, to whom the instructions in the Appendix marked (B) were given by the committee; and the Secretary of State added to them the letters marked (C) and (D). On the 12th day of July Captain Eaton returned to Philadelphia, with Nicolas Romaine in his custody, and made the report of his proceedings marked (E.) He delivered also to the committee, under seal, a number of papers found by him in the possession of said Romaine, of which such as are supposed to be material are contained in the Appendix, and marked Nos. 1, 4, 18, 24, 25, 27. The examination of Nicolas Romaine engaged much of the attention of the committee until the 22d of July, when he subscribed his deposition (A B.) and, having given bond for his appearance before the Senate on the trial of the impeachment of William Blount, was dismissed from further attendance, and received, at his particular request, the certificate marked (F.)

The letter No. 23, found among the papers of William Blount, signed James Grant, and dated Knoxville, May 24th, 1797, being supposed to contain the proof that the said James Grant had been the confidential bearer of the letter from William Blount to James Carey, communicated to Congress by the President of the United States, on the 3d of July; it was deemed expedient to adopt the same measures for the seizure of his person and papers, as had

been taken in the case of Nicolas Romaine. Major Thomas Lewis was employed for this purpose by the committee, who charged him, on the 11th of July, with the execution of the warrant marked (G) He was further directed to serve on John Rogers and James Carey, respectively, the precepts (H) and (I) requiring their appearance before the committee for examination; which precepts were accompanied with the letter marked (K) from the committee to John Rogers, who resided beyond the jurisdiction of the United States, and with the letters marked (L), (M,) and (N) from the Secretary of War, who readily, at the desire of the committee, co-operated with them in their endeavor to obtain the testimony of these witnesses. The instructions to Major Lewis are in the Appendix marked (O.) In the interim, between the departure and the return of Major Lewis, the Secretary of War communicated to the committee the letters marked (Q) and (R) from Col. David Henly and Benjamin Hawkins, Esq., covering the examinations of James Carey, marked (T U, No. 1,) and (T U, No. 2,) taken at Tellico, by directions from the Executive, together with the examination of William M. Loveley, marked (T U, No. 3,) and the original letter marked in the Appendix (No. 15.) On the 25th of September, Major Lewis having arrived at Germantown, in the State of Pennsylvania, with James Grant in his custody, and accompanied by John Rogers and James Carey, made his report marked (P;) and the depositions of the said James Carey, John Rogers and James Grant were, immediately thereafter, taken by the committee, and are hereunto annexed, marked (T U, No. 4,) (V W) and (X Y,) respectively. Before the discharge of Major Grant, he gave bond for his appearance before the Senate on the trial of the impeachment of William Blount. The letters referred to in his deposition, from William Blount to James Carey and Major Loveley, dated April 24, 1797, are marked (No. 16) and (No. 17.)

To complete the series of the correspondence between William Blount and Nicolas Romaine, as disclosed by the letters found in their possession, respectively, the letter (No. 6) from the latter to the former, appeared alone to be wanting. This letter, on or about the 13th of July, was received by the Secretary of State in an anonymous letter, which had been transmitted by mail, but without any post mark other than the word "Free." The anonymous letter and a translation of it are subjoined to the Appendix, marked (No. 9, A.)

The committee having received information that John Chisholm, named in the letter from William Blount to James Carey, which gave rise to the present inquiry, had sailed from Philadelphia in a vessel belonging to or chartered by Mr. William Davy, a merchant of that city, requested the attendance of Mr. Davy for examination. He waited on the committee agreeably to their desire; and, after expressing considerable embarrassment from peculiar circumstances attendant on his situation, with some reluctance, made the deposition (C. D.) Mr. Davy has since communicated to the committee the extract of a letter from his brother in London, which is subjoined to his deposition, and marked (C. D., No. 2.)

The disclosure made by Davy led to the examination of George Fisher, contained in his deposition (E. F.) The suspicion, excited by the latter part of this deposition, was traced by the committee, and satisfactorily removed by the testimony of William Bell, Appendix (G. H.) The communication from the Secretary of State, of the 20th July, marked (I. K.) is connected with, and explanatory of, the subject matter of their depositions, and of the letter from Robert Liston, Esq., the Minister Plenipotentiary of his Britanic Majesty, to Nicolas Romayne, found among the papers of the latter, dated Philadelphia, 28th April, 1797. Appendix (No. 18.)

With relation to the paper (No. 28) found in the possession of William Blount, endorsed by him, "Judge Turner, *Memo.* of force, &c." George Turner, Esq., late one of the Judges of the territory of the United States Northwest of the River Ohio, was interrogated by the committee, and the result is contained in his deposition, Appendix (L. M.)

In the course of the investigation entrusted to the committee, a number of persons were examined, whose testimony in many instances proved to be immaterial. It was thought proper to take the depositions of Elisha B. Hopkins, Charles Buxton, and John Franklin, which are herewith reported—Appendix (X. O.) (P. Q.) and (R. S.)

On the 13th of July, the Chevalier D'Yrujo, the Minister Plenipotentiary of his Catholic Majesty, called on the committee and made the communications, in the Appendix marked (A. B. C.) (D. E. F.) In consequence of these communications the committee immediately dispatched, by mail, to Major Lewis, their messenger to the State of Tennessee, the letter, Appendix (S.) covering a subpoena for — Mitchel, named in the said communication. Major Lewis has informed the committee, since his return, that he

received the letter and subpoena, but that his most diligent inquiries were unavailing to discover the person described in them.

On the 24th of July, the Chevalier D'Yrujo again called upon the committee, and introduced to them John Phillips Ripley, who delivered a paper containing the information afterwards included in his deposition (G H I.) On the succeeding day, the Chevalier D'Yrujo presented to the committee, Thomas Odiorne, who afterwards made the deposition, (K L M.) Although there was an appearance of irregularity in the medium adopted by these persons for making their communications to the committee; and although the committee at that time possessed satisfactory evidence that the statement made in these depositions were incorrect, so far as related to the essential objects of investigation and inquiry, and although it was not very material whether the mistake proceeded from the misrepresentation of Captain Eaton, or the misapprehension of the witnesses, or from worse motives, it was nevertheless conceived to be the duty of the committee, in justice to the persons named in these depositions, to obtain an explanation from Captain Eaton, of the facts asserted in them. On this subject the House is referred to the letters marked in the Appendix (T,) (U,) (V), (W) and to the deposition (N O P) and for further evidence connected herewith, to the report of Captain Eaton, before mentioned (E,) and the letter from Richard Harrison, Esq., Attorney of the United States for the District of New York, to the Secretary of State, (E, No. 2.) It is proper to add that the caution given by Col. Pickering to Captain Eaton, was intimated to him by request of the committee, who were apprehensive that an indiscreet and premature disclosure of evidence might increase the difficulty of further discovery.

The letter from Captain Eaton to Col. Ifogdon, alluded to in the deposition of the former, is on the files of the committee, and corroborated his narrative.

On or about the 6th of October the Secretary of War transmitted to the committee the letters in the Appendix (No. 11, A) and (No. 11, B) from John Chisholm to Col. John McKee and John Rogers, respectively, dated March 17, 1797.

On the 23d of November the Minister Plenipotentiary of His Catholic Majesty sent to the committee the note of that date (Q R S) covering the letter (Q R S, No. 2) from Elijah Clark to the Spanish consul, at Charleston, South Carolina, dated August 9, 1797. It is obvious that this communication has been made too late to enable the committee to pursue the investigation of its contents.

A large package of the circular letters (No. 29) was intercepted and delivered to the committee; some of these letters were directed to various persons in Tennessee; others were folded without any address.

The committee have supposed it to be their duty to submit to the House, in addition to the exhibits hereinbefore referred to, the correspondence contained in the Appendix (A a) to (A u) inclusive, on account of its connection with the object of their appointment; although a part of these communications, being anonymous, could not form the basis of any further proceedings; and although where further investigation was attempted, it failed of producing satisfactory information. The letters (A a,) (A b,) (A c), (A g) appear to be addressed to the Secretary of State, and were delivered by him to the committee.

The committee in presenting to the consideration of the House this succinct narrative of their proceedings, together with the evidence collected by them and the correspondence annexed, believe that they sufficiently fulfill the duty assigned to them, without anticipating, by their own inferences or observations, the judgment of the House on the whole matter. It is to be regretted that some suggestions still remain unexplained, or that any part of the subject should continue in obscurity; but the committee have done all in their power for the discovery of the truth, without incurring a greater expense than the probability of success was deemed to warrant. And this report is respectfully submitted as the best practicable result of their earnest endeavors.

NOVEMBER 30, 1797.

CHAPTER XXII.

Mr. Sitgreaves' motion—Mr. McDowell, of North Carolina, on the 8th of January calls up the matter, but Mr. Sitgreaves being absent it was further postponed—Mr. McDowell renews his motion on January 16th, but Mr. Sitgreaves being absent, no action is taken—On the 17th Mr. Sitgreaves appeared—The Articles of Impeachment read on the 29th of January—Their full text.

After the report and documents had been read, Mr. Sitgreaves said: "It had been usual upon extraordinary and important occasions, to have printed more copies of papers than the usual number; he thought this was one of those occasions and moved that six hundred copies might be printed."

The motion was agreed to, and the report and documents were ordered to lie on the table.

The matter lay over until the 8th of January, when Mr. McDowell, of North Carolina, called it up, stating that there was great agitation of the public mind respecting it, and concluded by introducing a resolution directing the committee to report articles of impeachment.

It appearing from the journals, however, that Mr. Sitgreaves had leave of absence, the resolution of Mr. McDowell was ordered to lie on the table.

Again, on Tuesday, January 16, Mr. McDowell rose and renewed his motion. He would not agree to any further delay. He spoke of the promptness with which the House had acted at the commencement of this business. No sooner had Mr. Blount's letter been laid before them than he was impeached. That committee had made a report, but no further step had yet been taken. What were the motives of the committee he could not tell; they perhaps thought they had done their duty. He thought the House was bound to the country to proceed with the business, and that they were incurring censure every hour which they neglected it.

Mr. Sitgreaves still being absent, the decision of the question was postponed till the following Thursday. On Wednesday, the 17th, Mr. Sitgreaves was present, and said he would not go into the reasons for the delay, but would state that the committee would report the Articles of Impeachment in two or three days.

On Monday, the 29th of January, 1799, the Articles of Impeachment were presented to the House.

In moving to take up the Articles, Mr. Sitgreaves made the following important statement, to wit:

“It would be seen that the Articles were predicated upon the single letter of William Blount to James Carey, which was communicated to the House by the President of the United States.”

The Articles of Impeachment are the following, viz:

Articles exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States, in the name of themselves and of all the people of the United States, against William Blount, in the maintenance of their impeachment against him for high crimes and misdemeanors.

ARTICLE 1. That, whereas, the United States, in the months of February, March, April, May and June, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, and for many years then past, were at peace with His Catholic Majesty, the King of Spain; and, whereas, during the months aforesaid, His said Catholic Majesty and the King of Great Britain were at war with each other; yet, the said William Blount, on or about the months aforesaid, then being a Senator of the United States, and well knowing the premises, but disregarding the duties and obligations of his high station, and designing and intending to disturb the peace and tranquility of the United States, and to violate and infringe the neutrality thereof, and conspire, and contrive to create, promote, and set on foot within the jurisdiction and territory of the United States, and to conduct and carry on from thence, a military hostile expedition against the territories and dominions of His said Catholic Majesty in the Floridas and Louisiana, or a part thereof, for the purpose of wresting the same from His Catholic Majesty, and of conquering the same for the King of Great Britain, with whom His said Catholic Majesty was then at war as aforesaid, contrary to the duty of his trust and station as a Senator of the United States, in violation of the obligations of neutrality, and against the laws of the United States, and the peace and interests thereof.

ARTICLE 2. That, whereas, on the twenty-seventh day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five, a Treaty of Friendship, Limits, and Navigation had been made and concluded between the United States and His Catholic Majesty, by the Fifth Article whereof it is stipu-

lated and agreed, "that the two high contracting parties shall, by all the means in their power, maintain peace and harmony among the several Indian nations who inhabit the country adjacent to the lines and rivers, which, by the preceding articles, form the boundaries of the two Floridas; and the better to obtain this effect, both parties oblige themselves expressly to restrain by force all hostilities on the part of the Indian nations living within their boundary, so that Spain will not suffer her Indians to attack the colonies of the United States, nor the Indians inhabiting her territory; nor will the United States permit these last-mentioned Indians to commence hostilities against subjects of His Catholic Majesty or his Indians, in any manner whatever;" yet, the said William Blount, on or about the months of February, March, April, May and June, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, then being a Senator of the United States, and well knowing the premises, and that the United States were then at peace with His said Catholic Majesty, and that His Catholic Majesty was at war with the King of Great Britain, but disregarding the duties of his high station, and the stipulations of the said treaty, and the obligations of neutrality, did conspire and contrive to excite the Creek and Cherokee Nations of Indians, then inhabiting within the territorial boundary of the United States, to commence hostilities against the subjects and possessions of His Catholic Majesty, in the Floridas and Louisiana, for the purpose of reducing the same to the dominion of the King of Great Britain, with whom His Catholic Majesty was then at War as aforesaid; contrary to the duty of his trust and station as a Senator of the United States, in violation of the said treaty of Friendship, Limits, and Navigation, and of the obligations of neutrality, and against the laws of the United States, and the peace and interests thereof:

ARTICLE 3. That, whereas, by the ordinances and acts of Congress for regulating trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes, and for preserving peace in the frontiers, it has been made lawful for the President of the United States, in order to secure the continuance of the friendship of the said Indian tribes, to appoint such persons, from time to time, as temporary agents, to reside among the Indians, as he shall think fit: and whereas, in pursuance of the said authority, the President of the United States, on or about the eighth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-six, did appoint Benja-

min Hawkins, to be the principal temporary agent for Indian affairs, within the nations south of the river Ohio, and north of the territorial line of the United States; and whereas the said Benjamin Hawkins accepted the said appointment, and on the 21st day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, and for a long time before and afterwards, did exercise the functions, powers and duties attached to the same; yet the said William Blount, on or about the said twenty-first day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven; then being a Senator of the United States, and well knowing the premises, did, in the prosecution of his criminal designs and of his conspiracies aforesaid, and the more effectually to accomplish his intention of exciting the Creek and Cherokee Nations of Indians to commence hostilities against the subjects of His Catholic Majesty, further conspire and contrive to alienate and divert the confidence of the said Indian tribes or nations from the said Benjamin Hawkins, the principal temporary agent aforesaid, and to diminish, impair, and destroy the influence of the said Benjamin Hawkins with the said Indian tribes, and their friendly intercourse and understanding with him, contrary to the duty of his trust and station as a Senator of the United States, and the peace and interests thereof.

ARTICLE 4. That, whereas, by the ordinances and acts of Congress aforesaid, it is made lawful for the President of the United States to establish trading houses at such places and posts on the western frontiers, or in the Indian country, as he shall judge most convenient, for the purpose of carrying on a liberal trade with the several Indian nations within the limits of the United States, and to appoint an agent at each trading house established as aforesaid, with such clerks and assistants as may be necessary for the execution of the said acts: And, whereas, by a treaty made and concluded on the second day of July, in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, between the United States and the Cherokee Nation of Indians, inhabiting within the limits of the United States, it is stipulated and agreed, that "the United States will send such, and so many persons to reside in said nation, as they may judge proper, not exceeding four, who shall qualify themselves to act as interpreters." And, whereas, the the President of the United States, as well in pursuance of the authorities in this article mentioned, as of the acts of Congress referred to in the third article, did appoint James Carey to be interpreter of the United States to the Cherokee nation of Indians,

to assist at the public trading house established at the Tellico Blockhouse in the State of Tennessee. And, whereas, the said James Carey did accept the said appointments, and on the twenty-first day of April, in the year last aforesaid, the said William Blount then being a Senator of the United States, and well-knowing the premises, did, in prosecution of his criminal designs, and in furtherance of his conspiracies aforesaid, conspire and contrive to induce the said James Carey from the duty and trust of his said appointments, and to engage the said James Carey to assist in the promotion and execution of his said criminal intentions and conspiracies aforesaid, contrary to the duty of his trust and station as a Senator of the United States, and against the laws and treaties of the United States, and the peace and interests thereof.

ARTICLE 5. That, whereas, certain tribes or nations of Indians inhabit within the territorial limits of the United States, between whom, or many of them, and the settlements of the United States certain boundary lines have, by successive treaties, been stipulated and agreed upon, to separate the lands and possessions of the United States, and the citizens thereof; and, whereas, particularly, by the treaty in the last article mentioned, to have been made with the Cherokee Nation, on the second day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, the boundary line between the United States and the Cherokee Nation was agreed and defined; and it was further stipulated, that the same should be ascertained and marked plainly by three persons appointed on the part of the United States, and three Cherokees on the part of that nation; and, whereas, by another treaty made with the said Cherokee Nation, on the 26th day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four, the said hereinbefore recited treaty of the second day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-one, was confirmed and established, and it was mutually agreed that the said boundary line should be actually ascertained and marked in the manner prescribed by the said last mentioned treaty; and, whereas, in pursuance of the said treaties, Commissioners were duly nominated and appointed on the part of the United States, to ascertain and mark the said boundary line; yet the said William Blount, on or about the said twenty-first day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-seven, then being a Senator of the United States, and well knowing the premises, in further prosecution of his said criminal designs and

of his conspiracies aforesaid, and the more effectually to accomplish his intention of exciting the said Indians to commence hostilities against the subjects of His Catholic Majesty, did further conspire and contrive to diminish and impair the confidence of the said Cherokee Nation in the Government of the United States, and to create and foment discontents and disaffection amongst the said Indians towards the Government of the United States, in relation to the ascertainment and making of the said boundary line, contrary to the duty and trust of his station as a Senator of the United States, and against the peace and interests thereof.

And the House of Representatives, by protestation, saving to themselves the liberty of exhibiting, at any time hereafter, any further articles, or other accusation or impeachment against the said William Blount, and also of replying to his answers which he shall make unto the said Articles, or any of them, and of offering proof to all and every of the aforesaid Articles, and to all and every other Articles, impeachment or accusation, which shall be exhibited by them, as the case shall require, to demand that the said William Blount may be put to answer the said crimes and misdemeanors, and that such proceedings, examinations, trials, and judgments, may be thereupon had and given as are agreeable to law and justice.

The Articles were agreed to.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Names of the managers of the Impeachment—The managers present the Articles of Impeachment on February 7th—Debate on Mode of Procedure, and resolutions adopted—Mr. Livermore's resolutions—Committee appointed to report on Mode of Procedure—Report adopted, by a vote of 22 to 5—Mr. Sitgreaves' remarks on receipt of Senate proceedings—A conference between the two Houses—Mr. Ross reports from the Managers.

The managers of the Impeachment on the part of the House were elected by ballot, and consisted of Messrs. Sitgreaves, Bayard, Harper, Gordon, Pinckney, Dana, Sewall, Hosmer, Dennis, Evans and Tenlay. Mr. Baldwin was elected, but declined to serve.

On Wednesday, February 7th, the Managers were introduced to the Senate and presented the Articles.

After some debate as to the mode of proceeding in cases of impeachment generally, it was, on Friday, 9th,

Resolved, That the Senate should be constituted a Court for the trial of impeachments by taking the following oath, viz:

I, ———, solemnly swear (or affirm, as the case may be) that in all things appertaining to the trial of the impeachment of ———, I will do impartial justice according to law.

This oath or affirmation was to be administered by the Secretary to the President of the Senate, and by the President to each member of the Senate.

On Tuesday, February 15, Mr. Livermore moved in the Senate that a committee be appointed to consider and report what measures ought to be taken in regard to said impeachment preferred by the House of Representatives against William Blount. It was agreed that the motion lie for consideration.

On Tuesday, February 20th, the Senate took up the motion made by Mr. Livermore on the 15th.

Whereupon, *Ordered*, That Messrs. Livermore, Ross, and Stockton, be a committee to consider and report the same.

On Thursday, February 22d, the committee reported in part; and the report, which, being amended, reads as follows:

“The committee to whom was recommitted the report of the committee appointed to prepare rules of proceeding, in the case of the impeachment against William Blount, report, in part, that a writ of summons issue, directed to the said William Blount, in the form following:

“UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

“The Senate of the United States of America to William Blount, late a Senator of the United States for the State of Tennessee, greeting: Whereas, the House of Representatives of the United States of America did, on the 7th day of July last past, in their own name and in the name of all the people of the United States, impeach you, the said William Blount, charging you with high crimes and misdemeanors before the Senate of the United States: And, whereas, the said House of Representatives did, on the 7th day of February, of the present year, exhibit to the Senate their Articles of Impeachment against you, the said William Blount, charging you with crimes and misdemeanors, therein specially set forth, (a true copy of which Articles of Impeachment is annexed to this writ) and did demand that you, the said William Blount, should be put to answer the said crimes and misdemeanors; and that such proceedings, examinations, trials and judgments might be therefore had, as are agreeable to law and justice, you, the said William Blount, are, therefore, summoned to be and appear before the Senate of the United States of America, at their Chamber, in the city of Philadelphia, in the State of Pennsylvania, on the third Monday of December next, at the hour of eleven of that day, then and there to answer the said Articles of Impeachment, and then and thereto abide by, obey and perform, such orders and judgments as the Senate of the United States shall make in the premises, according to the Constitution and Laws of the said United States. And herein you are no wise to fail. Witness, the Hon. Thomas Jefferson, Esq., Vice President of the United States of America, and President of the Senate thereof, at the city of Philadelphia, the first day of March, in the year of our Lord 1798, and of the independence of the United States, the twenty-second.

“Which summons shall be signed by the Secretary of the Senate.

“That the said summons shall be served on the said William Blount by the Sergeant-at-Arms of this House, or a special messenger, who shall leave a true copy of the writ and the Articles annexed with the said William Blount, if he can be found, show-

ing him the original ; or at the several places of residence of the said William Blount, if he cannot be found. Which messenger shall make return of the writ of summons, and of his proceedings in virtue thereof, to the Senate, on the appearance day therein mentioned.

“And that a message be sent to the House of Representatives, giving information that the Senate have directed the said writ to be issued, and of the day mentioned therein for the appearance of the said William Blount.”

The report was agreed to ; yeas, 22, nays 5. Messrs. Anderson and Jackson, Senators from Tennessee, both voted in the negative.

On March 2d these proceedings were reported to the House. Whereupon, Mr. Sitgreaves gave his reasons for thinking, that the return day of the writ of summons should be made to the present session. He said : “He did not know how the demand from this House ought to be made for the appointment of an earlier day in the summons ; but he thought it would be well to commit the message to a select committee ; which committee, if the House thought proper, might be the managers of the Impeachment.”

On April 6th, Mr. Sitgreaves, on behalf of the managers, introduced a resolution that a conference be desired with the Senate, and that the managers of the Impeachment be the managers for the House at the proposed conference ; that the object of this conference was to request the Senate to make the return day of the summons to fall during the present session of Congress.

The resolutions were adopted.

On April 16th, Mr. Ross, from the managers appointed by the Senate, reported a resolution :

“That it is not, at this time, expedient to alter the return day of the summons.”

Which was agreed to.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Senate, on December 17, 1798, resolved itself into a High Court of Impeachment for the trial of William Blount—Mr. Blount was called, and did not answer—On the next day Jared Ingersol and A. J. Dallas were admitted by the Court as Counsel for Mr. Blount—Mr. Ingersol makes his plea—Its full text—Mr. Bayard's replication—Its full text.

On December 17, 1798, the Senate of the United States formed itself into a High Court of Impeachment for the trial of William Blount.

James Mathers, Sergeant-at-arms of the Senate, made return under oath that he had executed his process by reading a copy of the writ of summons to William Blount and also by leaving a copy at his place of residence of which he informed the said William Blount.

By order of the President the Sergeant-at-arms of the Senate made proclamation in the following words :

“Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye! William Blount, late a Senator from the State of Tennessee, come forward and answer the Articles of Impeachment exhibited against you by the House of Representatives.”

William Blount not appearing, the Court adjourned to 12 o'clock the next day.

December 18th Jared Ingersol and A. J. Dallas were admitted by the Court to appear as the defendant's counsel.

On motion, the managers of the Impeachment were allowed until the 24th to make further preparations.

December 24th, the managers of the Impeachment moved that the counsel for the deponent be required to produce their powers of attorney to appear for the defence.

The Court ruled that it was not necessary to produce any such authority, as the counsel had already been admitted.

Whereupon Mr. Ingersol made the following plea, which was read by the Secretary :

“IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
“December 24, 1798.

“The aforesaid William Blount, saving and reserving to himself all exceptions to the imperfections and uncertainty of the Ar-

ticles of Impeachment, by Jared Ingersol and A. J. Dallas, his attorneys, comes and defends the force and injury, and says that he, to the said Articles of Impeachment preferred against him by the House of Representatives of the United States, ought not to be compelled to answer, because he says, that the eighth article of certain amendments of the Constitution of the United States, having been ratified by nine States, after the same was, in a Constitutional manner, proposed to the consideration of the several States in the Union, is of equal obligation with the original Constitution, and now forms a part thereof, and that by the same article it is declared and provided that "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and District wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses against him, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence.

"That proceedings by impeachment are provided and permitted by the Constitution of the United States, only on charges of bribery, treason, and other high crimes and misdemeanors, alleged to have been committed by the President, Vice President, and other civil officers of the United States, in the execution of their offices held under the United States, as appears by the fourth section of the second article, and by the seventh clause of the third section of the first article, and other articles and clauses contained in the Constitution of the United States.

"That although true it is, that he, the said William Blount, was a Senator of the United States from the State of Tennessee, at the several periods in the said Articles of Impeachment referred to; yet, that he, the said William Blount, is not *now a Senator*, and is not, nor was at the several periods, so as aforesaid referred to, an *officer* of the United States; nor is he, the said William Blount, in and by the said articles charged with having committed any crime or misdemeanor, in the execution of any civil office held under the United States, or with any malconduct in civil office, or abuse of any public trust, in the execution thereof.

"That the Courts of Common Law, of a criminal jurisdiction, of the States, wherein the offences in the said articles recited are said to have been committed, as well as those of the United States, are competent to the cognizance prosecution, and punishment, of the said crimes and misdemeanors, if the same have been perpe-

trated, as is suggested and charged by the said articles, which, however, he utterly denies. All which the said William is ready to verify, and prays judgment whether this High Court will have further cognizance of this suit, and of the said impeachment, and whether he, the said William, to the said Articles of Impeachment, so as aforesaid preferred by the House of Representatives of the United States, ought to be compelled to answer.

“JARED INGERSOLL,
“A. J. DALLAS.”

JANUARY 3, 1799.

To the foregoing plea Mr. Bayard, chairman of the managers on the part of the House, made replication as follows:

“The House of Representatives of the United States, prosecuting, on behalf of themselves and the people of the United States, the Articles of Impeachment exhibited by them to the Senate of the United States against the said William Blount, reply to the plea of the said William Blount, and say, that the matters alleged in the said plea are not sufficient to exempt the said William Blount from answering the said Articles of Impeachment, because they say that, by the Constitution of the United States, the House of Representatives had power to prefer the said Articles of Impeachment, and that the Senate have full and the sole power to try the same. Whereupon they demand that the plea aforesaid, of the said William Blount, be not allowed, but that the said William Blount be compelled to answer the said Articles of Impeachment.

Signed by order and on behalf of the House,

“JONATHAN DAYTON, *Speaker.*”

Mr. Ingersoll rejoined as follows:

“And the aforesaid William Blount, by Jared Ingersoll and A. J. Dallas, his attorneys, says that the matter by him before alleged, which he is ready to verify, is sufficient reason in law to show that this Court ought not to hold jurisdiction of the said impeachment and the Articles therein set forth; which said matter so as aforesaid by him alleged, the said House of Representatives not having denied or made answer thereto, he prays the judgment of this honorable Court, whether they will hold further jurisdiction of the said impeachment, or take cognizance thereof, and whether the said William Blount shall make further answer thereto.

“JARED INGERSOLL,
“A. J. DALLAS.”

CHAPTER XXV.

Comments—Synopsis of Mr. Bayard's Argument—Mr. Dallas replies to Mr. Bayard—Synopsis of his Argument—Mr. Ingersol's Argument—Mr. Harper's Argument.

It will be seen from the pleadings that the plea went to the jurisdiction of the Court; that issue was joined on a pure question of law, and that the merits of the case were in no wise relevant to the decision.

By agreement, Mr. Bayard first addressed the Court.

Mr. Bayard first took up the question of the right to a trial by jury, which was raised in the plea. He argued that, even allowing that objection the utmost latitude, it was not pertinent in a plea to the jurisdiction; because, before anything could be found for a jury to try, the articles must be answered, the facts put in issue, and then, indeed, the question might be proper, whether the Court were bound to award a process in the nature of a *venire facias*, to bring a jury to the bar. Admitting, then, that it belonged to a jury to try the facts, this in itself would be a weighty reason to show that the articles ought to be answered for the purpose of forming the issues, which alone could be the objects of the trial by jury. He argued further, that if the objection went to the jurisdiction of the Senate, that this would extinguish its judicial character entirely and utterly defeat the impeachment provision in the Constitution. He thought that while it was the general rule that a trial by jury was guaranteed in criminal prosecutions, that there were exceptions in the cases of impeachments and courts martial.

Having disposed of this objection, Mr. Bayard maintained:

1. That impeachment is not confined to officers, but extends to every citizen.

2. That a Senator is an officer of the United States, and as such officer is liable to impeachment by express constitutional provision.

To establish the first point, he urged, that the Constitution employed terms in their common law signification, and hence, must be interpreted and construed under the rules of the common law. Thus, the Constitution in a multitude of instances employs terms which it does not define, but the meaning of which we must seek

in the common law; e. g., when it is said that attainder shall not work corruption of the blood, we must have recourse to the common law to know what "corruption of blood" is. So with regard to impeachment. What was impeachment at common law? For what offences did it lie? What class of persons were liable to impeachment? Mr. Bayard endeavored to show that the question of impeachability was a question of discretion, only, with the Commons and Lords and would lie for whatever they conceived a high crime or misdemeanor, and that every individual was liable on an impeachment. This being the common law, the impeachment provision of the Constitution must be construed in accordance with it.

To establish the second point—that a Senator is an officer—Mr. Bayard made a long and labored argument, which cannot well be abridged, and which is too tedious and technical to be given here.

With regard to the objection that William Blount was not an officer of the United States, Mr. Bayard says the objection falls if either of the two propositions set out can be maintained; the objection that he is *not now* a Senator is not well taken, if he was such when the impeachment was instituted; the objection that the acts charged were not connected with the execution of the duties of his office, is not well taken, because there is nothing in the Constitution which confines impeachment to official acts and such restriction is contrary to the plain dictates of common sense; finally, with regard to the suggestion that the courts of common law had competent jurisdiction, it was not true, because those courts could not disqualify, which power belonged exclusively to this court (the Senate.)

January 4th, Mr. Dallas followed for the defendant. He stated that he thought the consideration of two propositions would embrace all that was necessary to be said, either in maintenance of the plea to the jurisdiction of the Senate, or in answer to the adverse arguments. He should, therefore, endeavor to establish,

1. That only civil officers of the United States are impeachable; and that the offences for which an impeachment lies, must be committed in the execution of a public office.

2. That a Senator is not a civil officer impeachable within the meaning of the Constitution; and that, in the present instance, no crime or misdemeanor is charged to have been committed by William Blount in the character of a Senator.

Mr. Dallas would not have thought it necessary to discuss the first branch of the first proposition had it not been for there-

markable position taken by the manager, that impeachment lies against all persons and for every species of office, to be determined by the discretion of Congress. Mr. Dallas said, "A claim of jurisdiction so unlimited, embracing every object of the penal code, annihilating all discriminations between civil and military cases, and overthrowing the boundaries of Federal and State authority, ought surely to have been supported by an express and unequivocal obligation: but, behold, it rests entirely on an arbitrary implication from the use of a single word.

Mr. Dallas insisted:

1. That "the doctrine is contrary to the *principles* of our Federal compact," under which "all the powers and attributes of the National Government are matters of express and positive grant and transfer; whatever is not expressly granted and transferred, must be deemed to remain with the people, or with the respective States."

2. That the doctrine is inconsistent with the general policy of the law of impeachments. He quotes *Woodeson* to show that impeachment was intended to reach that kind of offences and that that class of delinquents, when, from the nature of the offence and the influence of the person the ordinary courts could not give adequate redress or secure the necessary protection. He also stated that all the instances specified in *Woodeson* are of an official nature; and no other description of impeachment by the Commons can be traced in the English books.

3. The doctrine is inconsistent with a fair construction of the the terms of the Constitution. In arguing this point Mr. Dallas remarked in conclusion: "The power, as it relates to the civil officers of the United States, is expressly given; it is not expressly given as relates to any other description of citizens; and, therefore, it is enough to observe that it cannot be assumed or implied."

Upon the second branch of the first general proposition, (that the offence for which an impeachment lies must be committed in the execution of an official trust) Mr. Dallas remarked, that the courts of the country had power to punish for the common offences, but not for all official offences; hence the necessity of impeachment, and its restriction to this sphere. He fortified this position by reading express provisions to this effect from the Constitutions of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Vermont, Kentucky and Tennessee, and argued that, this being the sense of the

States individually, it might be fairly presumed to be their sense collectively.

Upon the second general proposition, the argument is technical and very elaborate—too much so to be reproduced here. Mr. Dallas argued in general that “the Legislative Department is, in all free governments, regarded as the sovereign; and those who compose it cannot be properly classed as civil officers, or the subordinate functionaries of the State.” He urged the great inconvenience which would arise from an opposite construction by destroying the independence of the two branches of the Legislature, by enabling the House of Representatives to drive a Senator from his seat, by arming a majority with the instruments of personal vengeance against their political opponents, and by rendering Senators the judges in the description of “civil officers” would generate endless absurdity and inconsistency in the Constitution itself. He said, in conclusion, that the the Honorable manager has misunderstood his plea in supposing it to assert a right of trial by jury in cases properly impeachable.

Mr. Ingersoll followed Mr. Dallas, and in the same line of argument, considering in succession the *nature*, the *extent* and the *objects* of the power of impeachment, and arriving at the general propositions upon which the argument hinged, and which had been stated by Mr. Dallas. We make one quotation from his speech. He says: “As a further indication how little analogy there is between the character of a Senator and that of an officer of the Executive of the United States, let it be recollected that if a Senator resigns, or dies, in the recess of the State Legislature, the Executive of the State, not of the United States, supplies the vacancy. The small State of Delaware has the same number of Senators as the large State of Massachusetts. Why? Because the Senators are the representatives of sovereignty. Refine as we please, this proceeding aims at the Legislative character of the Senator. The impeachment destroys his influence as such. Common fame is a sufficient foundation for this mode of proceeding; its immediate effect, let the opinion of the House of Representatives determine who, on this occasion, even before the articles were presented or prepared, requested* that the accused, merely

*They demanded it.—ED.

on an intimation from them that they had resolved to impeach him, might be suspended from his seat in this House.”

Mr. Henper, on the part of the managers, concluded the argument.

He maintained the same two general propositions that had been laid down by Mr. Bayard. Upon the first proposition, insisting that every person for every crime is liable to impeachment under the discretion of the House, in conformity with what he alleged to be the English doctrine on this point, he asks: "if, therefore, it be proper and necessary to recur to every art and science for the explanation of terms which have been borrowed from it, where shall we search, but in the common law of England, for the nature and extent of the power of impeachment which our Constitution has borrowed from that law? It is answered, that we must recur to the Constitution itself. This, Mr. President, I would most readily admit—nay, most earnestly contend for—did the Constitution contain any explanation on this subject. But is that the case? Let the Constitution answer." Not finding any exposition of the nature and extent of impeachment in the Constitution, he concludes that its nature and extent are to be determined by the Common Law of England. "It cannot be doubted," he says, "that the term 'impeachment' in our Constitution has, and was intended by the framers of the Constitution to have precisely the same meaning, force, and extent, as in the English law. And it being perfectly clear that in the English law the power of impeachment is unlimited, and extends to every person and to every offence, it follows undeniably that the positions of my learned colleague remains unshaken, and that the defendant in the present case is liable to impeachment for the offences charged against him by the House of Representatives."

Upon the second general proposition (that a Senator is a civil officer of the United States within the meaning of the Constitution) the argument of Mr. Henper is more elaborate than that of his colleague, Mr. Bayard, and its character is such that to make an abridgment of it, which would fairly outline it, and would be for this work impracticable. Those wishing to pursue this question further are referred to the document itself.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Comments on the Arguments of Counsel—The Resolutions submitted on the 7th of January, on Liability to Impeachment—The debate—The vote taken January 10th and determined in the negative by a vote of yeas 11, nays 14—On motion to dismiss proceeding there are 14 ayes and 11 nays—The Vice-President announces the result and the Court adjourned without day.

In regard to all these arguments it may be remarked in general, that they are learned, lengthy, and able, but have no bearing whatever upon the historical facts of the alleged conspiracy. They are interesting to the lawyer, as monuments of Constitutional law, coming down from the first decade of our national existence; to the historian they are interesting, as showing what progress had been made in settling the construction of the Constitution; they are interesting to the statesman and the philosopher as throwing light upon the nature of the government, and as evidences of the inherent defects of a written Constitution, which made such argument possible.

January 7th. On motion to agree to the following resolutions:

That William Blount was a civil officer of the United States, within the meaning of the Constitution of the United States, and, therefore, liable to impeachment by the House of Representatives;

That, as the Articles of Impeachment charge him with high crimes and misdemeanors, supposed to have been committed while he was a Senator of the United States, his plea ought to be overruled.

After debate, on motion, the Court adjourned till 12 o'clock the next day.

January 8th, the Senate resumed consideration of the motion, and, after debate, the Court adjourned till the next day, 12 o'clock.

January 9th, the Senate resumed consideration of the motion, and after debate adjourned till 12 o'clock the next day.

January 10th, the Court proceeded in the debate on the motion, and on the question to agree thereto it was *determined in the negative*—yeas 11; nays 14, as follows:

YEAS.—Messrs. Chipman, Davenport, Goodhue, Latimer, Livermore, Lloyd, Paine, Ross, Stockton, Sedgwick and Tracy.

NAYS.—Messrs. Anderson, Bingham, Bloodworth, Brown, Foster, Greene, Gunn, Hillhouse, Howard, Langdon, Marshall, Martin, Mason and Read.

On motion, the Court adjourned till 12 o'clock the next day.

January 11th, on motion, it was determined that—

The Court is of opinion that the matter alleged in the plea of the defendant is sufficient in law to show that this Court ought not to hold jurisdiction of the said impeachment, and that the said impeachment is dismissed.

Yeas 14, nays 11.

The yeas and nays on this question were exactly the reverse of what they were on the last.

On motion, *Ordered* that the Secretary notify the House of Representatives that the Senate will be ready to receive the managers of the House of Representatives and the counsel on Monday next, January 14, at 12 o'clock, to render judgment on the impeachment against William Blount.

The Court then adjourned.

January 14th, the Court was opened and the parties were in attendance. The Vice President pronounced the judgment of the Court as follows:

Gentlemen, Managers of the House of Representatives, and Gentlemen, Counsel for William Blount:

The Court, after having given the most mature and serious consideration to the question, and to the full and able arguments urged on both sides, has come to the decision which I am now about to deliver.

“The Court is of opinion that the matter alleged in the plea of the defendant is sufficient in law to show that this Court ought not to hold jurisdiction of the said impeachment, and that the said impeachment is dismissed.”

Copies of the judgment were delivered to the managers and to the counsel for the defendant, respectively.

After which they withdrew; and, on motion, the Court adjourned without a day.

CHAPTER XXVII.

*Observations on the testimony—Political Excitement and Influences—
Calm Judgment after nearly a Century, and a review of all the
facts and circumstances—Quotations from Dr. Ramsey's and Put-
nam's Histories.*

After the lapse of almost a century from the time when these proceedings were had, we are able to form a better judgment respecting them than could be formed at the time, when political excitement was at a high pitch and when the public mind was agitated and alarmed by all sorts of rumors and treasons, conspiracies, and civil wars. Viewed under the light we now have, the expulsion of Gen. Blount from the Senate and his impeachment must be pronounced hasty, ill-advised, and unjust.

Fortunately, the statement of Mr. Sitgreaves, chairman of committee to prepare the articles, that the articles were predicated solely upon the Carey letter, confines the examination of the question of Gov. Blount's legal guilt or innocence within a narrow compass. There are only two points to be inquired into: First, does the Carey letter justify the articles; second, is the letter itself evidence of guilt.

First: The charge in the first article is that Gov. Blount "conspired and contrived" to organize a military expedition "within the jurisdiction and territory of the United States and to conduct and carry on from thence a hostile, military expedition, &c."

It is not charged that Gov. Blount actually did set on foot such an expedition or even undertook to do so. The charge in this article is *the conspiracy*. Now it is true, that to constitute the crime of conspiracy, no overt act is necessary. But it is equally true, that there must be a positive and definite agreement and confederacy to do some particular unlawful thing. A consultation about the practicability of doing an unlawful thing, or even an agreement to do an unlawful thing upon contingencies, which contingencies never happen is not a conspiracy. It is equally true that one person alone cannot be guilty of conspiracy. With whom, then, does it appear from the Carey letter that Gov. Blount

conspired? So far is the letter from proving that Gov. Blount had conspired to do some particular unlawful thing, that it states the contrary in express language, no less than three distinct times. He says: "I believe, *but am not quite sure*, that the plan then talked of will be attempted this fall, &c." Again: "You are, however, to understand that it is *not yet quite certain* that the plan will be attempted." Finally: "*If* I attempt this plan, &c." Could an intelligent jury be found in the United States which would convict for conspiracy upon evidence which established the fact that the very object that the alleged conspiracy was designed to effect had not yet been agreed upon? If there was a conspiracy at all, the British Government was a party. But the British Government had not yet acceded to any arrangement, and what Gov. Blount should do depended entirely upon what that Government should do. So the charge of conspiracy falls. The charge in this article that he conspired and contrived to set on foot within the United States and carry on from thence a military expedition against Spain is utterly without ground of support in the Carey letter. On the contrary, it appears from the letter that no action whatever was to be taken unless satisfactory arrangements were made in England; and even had these arrangements been made, it was an arbitrary and unwarranted proceeding on the part of the committee to *assume* and charge that the expedition would be arranged *within* the jurisdiction of the United States, and its neutrality be thereby violated.

The charge in the second article must fall with that in the first, and for the same reasons. Gov. Blount did not, in fact, incite the Indians to war against Spain, nor did he, in fact, conspire so to do. While writing Carey that he expects to have his Indian friends with him, he tells him over and over again that there is nothing certain, and that he does not know whether he will engage in the enterprise or not.

With respect to the third article, the committee must have been quite sensible of the weakness of the material out of which they were laboring to bring forth an impeachment, when they had recourse to this accusation. The charge in substance is, that Gov. Blount was trying to get Hawkins out of office, because he was against his plan. Now, if the plan could be shown to be criminal then, indeed, there would be a propriety in showing that he wished

to remove Hawkins, the better to accomplish it; but *until* this could be shown, the charge that Gov. Blount desired Hawkins' removal is irrelevant, if not ridiculous.

With regard to the fourth article, that he attempted to seduce James Carey from his duty and trust as a servant of the United States and engage him in "his said criminal intentions and conspiracies" the same remark is to be repeated, that if the "said conspiracy" had been *established*, then the charge would have been pertinent. But the fact is, Gov. Blount did not know whether he would attempt anything or not, and distinctly told Carey that he did not know whether his services would be required or not.

With regard to the fifth article, the same remark is in place. That Gov. Blount, in order to keep up his consequence among the Indians, should tell the Indians that the government of the United States had swindled them, is not in itself a crime. To judge from the general conduct of the government and government agents towards the Indians, it is reasonable to conclude that the Indians had been over-reached and cheated.

The fatal defect in all the articles is this: They each and every one *assume* the precise thing which it was incumbent on the committee to establish by *proof*. Assuming the fact of a criminal conspiracy they make charges, which, if true, do not in themselves amount to criminal charges, but can only be construed as such on the assumption of a previous conspiracy, which is the very gist of the whole matter, and which they never troubled themselves to prove, but simply took for granted. If Gov. Blount was guilty at all, he was guilty either of a conspiracy, technically understood, or of an overt act, or of both. That he was not guilty of a conspiracy, we have already attempted to show, we have also endeavored to show that his efforts were only criminal on the condition that they were put forth in the endeavor to accomplish some particular and definite object, criminal in itself. Now if it appears from the Carey letter (and it certainly does appear) that Gov. Blount had not yet formed any intention or purpose whatever, the foundation of the whole impeachment fails.

Second: Is the letter itself evidence of guilt?

After what has been said it will not be necessary to dwell upon

this point. A careful reading and fair construction of the letter shows the following facts, viz :

A plan of some kind had been talked over in Philadelphia the winter before ; Captain Chisholm mentioned the subject to the British Minister ; Gov. Blount was interested in the plan ; a person had gone to England to see if the necessary preliminary arrangements could be made ; the Indians were expected to take a part if the plan should be attempted ; it was to be kept secret from all persons in the interest of the United States or of Spain ; Gov. Blount's consequence was to be kept up among the Indians ; Hawkins, who would oppose the plan, is to be removed from office, if practicable ; the letter was to be burned when read.

A very suspicious letter, indeed, if we assume, as the committee did, a criminal plan ; but entirely innocent in the absence of such assumption. Now, as a man is not to be *presumed* guilty, at the outset, and as Gov. Blount's guilt or innocence depended upon the nature of his plan, and as this letter throws no light upon the nature of the plan—which in fact is not a *plan*, but the *possibility* of a plan, it would follow that no evidence of Gov. Blount's guilt is furnished by the letter. In truth, the fact that the Argus-eyed Sitgreaves squeezed the letter for the articles, is sufficient to show that there was no ground for a charge in the letter which had not been brought forward in the articles.

The foregoing review of the articles of impeachment has been made from a technical, legal stand-point. Such a view is necessarily narrow, it is special pleading ; but it is precisely the kind of pleading that is requisite and necessary to employ against the indictment in the articles. It has been our purpose to attempt to show that the charges could not be substantiated either in law or in fact. If this should appear then Gov. Blount is vindicated in law.

But there is a much higher, and by far a more interesting consideration, and that is : Was Gov. Blount morally guilty of any criminal transaction ?

It is a matter of deep regret that much valuable material relating to this subject has been hopelessly lost or destroyed. Judge John B. Robertson, of New Orleans, writes to Gov. James D. Porter, of Tennessee, under date of February 6, 1876, as follows :

“ I have spent two days in the Louisiana State Library trying to

find material upon which to frame an answer and refutation to the charges against the pioneers of Tennessee, but the search was vain; as the library of the State, once so rich in historic material, has been robbed and plundered of most of its standard matter.

“With the scanty records obtainable here, I would not attempt a partial answer to these old slanders, when I know that the material and records may be found in Tennessee for a full and complete vindication of William Blount and his co-patriots in Tennessee.”

But the work of destruction had not been confined to the Louisiana State Library. Dr. Ramsay, the historian of Tennessee, writes to Gov. Porter, February 14, 1876, as follows:

“Every one knows that William Blount, one of the United States Senators from Tennessee, was impeached before that body and expelled from it, July 8, 1797. In your letter you allude to his vindication as made in 1835 by his brother, Willie Blount, formerly Governor of Tennessee, and referred to in my history of the State, page 702. Unfortunately that able and impartial vindication, together with all the other Blount papers, executive journal and correspondence with which the executor of Governor Willie Blount had generously enriched my large collection of historical and biographical and other material for my second volume, were all in my office, when in 1863, my private residence, office, extensive historical library, correspondence, and museum, manuscripts, all became a prey to the rapacity and incendiarism of a Federal soldier, and were all consumed together.”

Doctor Ramsay says of this document:

“Governor Willie Blount, the writer of it, was a younger brother of Senator Blount, was his private and official secretary, and was thus associated intimately with him in most of the transactions of his public and private life, and who succeeded him in the administration of the duties of Governor over the same people for many years. His character for candor and truth and impartiality will be no where questioned, and the position of no one could have been more favorable for the ascertainment of all the facts he mentions, or the purposes to which he alludes in his vindication of William Blount. At the time I read it (1862) the document was closely examined, even analyzed in all his bearings—its arguments and its conditions. It was supported by the most irrefragable testimony. I have had some opportunity in my past life of sifting and comparing contemporary testimony, from which to illuminate historical truth, and I here declare the vindication

by Gov. Willie Blount of Senator Blount to have been full and complete, not only explanatory and exculpatory in every particular, but perfectly satisfactory to myself at the time it was before me."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

What the evidence showed to have been Governor Blount's object—He took no unlawful steps—An examination of the testimony of Dr. Romaine—Colonel McClellan and the Blount letter—Chisholm—No evidence that Gov. Blount had any connection with him—Chisholm's influence with the Indians.

The evidence before the committee shows, and it is fairly admitted, that the ostensible plan of Gov. Blount was to co-operate with England in conquering for that power the Spanish possessions in the Floridas and Louisiana. We say "ostensible plan, because it may be that he conceived the ulterior design of securing this territory for the United States afterwards. But let this pass as conjecture. There was nothing criminal in the wish that Great Britain should possess this country in preference to Spain, nor was there anything criminal in his purpose of aiding the enterprise, provided he took no unlawful steps in so doing, such as organizing an expedition within the territory of the United States, of which purpose there is no where any show of evidence.

How did this plan originate in the mind of Gov. Blount?

Doctor Nicholas Romaine was a gentleman of fine culture and a man of the world. He was acquainted with Mr. Pinckney, Sir W. Pulteney, and Mr. Liston. He was at ease in this society; he had travelled much and was familiar, as his letters indicate, with the policies of the different courts of Europe. He was undoubtedly fond of political intrigue. He owned some land in North Carolina, and had occasion to correspond with Gov. Blount about it. Thus they became acquainted. The scheme for a land speculation followed, but was not carried out, owing to the small value of the Western lands. Genesee lands were high. Tennessee lands were comparatively valueless. Why was this? The Genesee country was in the neighborhood of Canada; Tennessee was in the neighborhood of the Spanish. With England in possession of Louisiana, the lands in Tennessee would be as valuable as those of the Genesee. It seems to have here and under these circumstances that Gov. Blount first conceived the idea of seeing what could be done to put Great Britain in the possession of Louisiana. No one who reads Dr. Romaine's deposition can

doubt its sincerity and truth. And the account he gives of the deep feeling exhibited by Gov. Blount, when speaking of the unfortunate situation of the Western people, shows clearly enough that it was his regard for the welfare of Tennessee—for the happiness and prosperity of her citizens—that effected him even to tears; tears which it was never dreamed would be exposed to the public gaze, but which were shed in secret and in the presence of a single friend.

With how much energy Gov. Blount prosecuted his plan, with what persons he conferred about it, with whom he corresponded we have no means of knowing. We may suppose, however, that he had been active, and especially in Tennessee. Carey swore before the committee that Col. John McClellan, of Knoxville, speaking of the letter he (Carey) had given up, had declared, that he had himself received a letter from Gov. Blount which he presumed was of the same purport “but, by G—d, they would not get that from him.” It may be remarked here in passing that it was a little inconsistent in an honorable committee to follow up anonymous communications, and to omit to send for such a gentleman as Col. McClellan. If Col. McClellan had received a letter from Gov. Blount it is to be supposed that many other persons had also received similar letters; at all events, Tennessee was ready for Blount’s plan, as appears from the conduct of the people on the impeachment of their favorite.

It does not appear that Gov. Blount had any connection whatever with the brawling Chisholm. Blount told Romaine that Chisholm had an affair of his own on hand which he (Blount) judged to be some petty plundering enterprise. This was not the kind of an enterprise that Gov. Blount contemplated. Gov. Blount’s remarks about Chisholm, as they appear in the depositions, all go to show the same, and that Gov. Blount regarded him as a marplot. The allusion to the business of Captain Chisholm in the opening of the letter to Carey shows no connection between them, further than that, Blount knew his plans, as did every one else who would let Chisholm talk to them. Gov. Blount means to say to Carey, to whom Chisholm had told his own plan: “You know what Chisholm was after; well, I have to tell you that something of that kind may possibly be attempted this fall.” It is not reasonable to suppose that a man of Gov. Blount’s experience, and knowing Chisholm as he did, should entrust any secret of importance to his keeping or run the risk of being compromised by him. Chisholm doubtless had some influence with the Indians and

might have been a useful man in the proper place, but that place was a very subordinate one. It was about the 20th of March, 1797, when Chisholm sailed for England. In a letter from Thomas Davy to his brother William, the reader will recollect that the writer informs him that Chisholm had accomplished nothing. This letter is dated September 13, 1797. But Lord Grenville's letter to Mr. Liston, declining to accede to the plan, bears date April 8th, 1797. The last of May Gov. Blount seems to have abandoned the business and wrote to Doctor Romayne, apologizing for not writing, and expressing his esteem, all of which seem to indicate that he regarded the affair at an end. On the 2d of June, Romayne writes Gov. Blount that he considers the project "more uncertain than he did," and this letter ends the correspondence between them.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A view of Affairs in Tennessee previous to the period of Gov. Blount's Impeachment—The first settlers from North Carolina—These made the first resistance to British Oppression—Defeat of Insurgents at Alamance—The people of the Territory in a state of Political Orphanage—Robertson and Shelby—The "Volunteer State" showed its pluck as early as October 10, 1774—Action of the Watauga Convention, in petitioning the Provisional Council of North Carolina to Annex them to that District—Patriotism of the early Settlers Sevier, Shelby and Marion—The Services of the Tennessee Soldiers—Col. Robertson's Settlement on the Lower Cumberland Valley—Nashville—Relations to Spain—Gen. Wilkinson—Spanish Intrigues to Destroy Western Settlements.

A preliminary view of the condition of affairs in Tennessee previous to this period will be of much assistance in the effort to form a just conception of Gov. Blount's proposed enterprise.

The first settlers of Tennessee were the insurgents of North Carolina, who made the first armed resistance to British oppression on this continent, and shed the first blood in the cause of American liberty, at the battle of Alamance, May 16, 1771. Speaking of these men, Dr. Ramsey says, in the letter before referred to:

"This defeat of the insurgents at Alamance quelled for a time the spirit of resistance, but the disaffection remained and caused the voluntary exile of thousands of indignant and independent freemen to the Western wilds, remote from the seat of power and free from the oppressions of royal officers. Watauga gave its cordial welcome to these honest hearted and virtuous patriots, and here was the cradle of the infant Hercules, Tennessee. But follow these pioneers further. In the midst of the seclusions of their quiet homes in the wilderness, the refugees find themselves isolated from all contact with any organized government—with no allegiance to any human power or law, and without any protection; in a word, in a state of political orphanage. Without rulers or political authority amongst themselves, they instinctively, as it were, form an organization of their own and call themselves the Watauga Association, which is even now considered a model of

self-government, and from its patriarchal character is admitted to be well adapted to the welfare and interests of a primitive people. Scarcely is this simple organization completed and in operation when a rumor reaches them that an invasion of an adjoining colony is threatened by a distant hostile tribe, instigated, as was believed, by British commissaries. At once Alamance was remembered and a spirit of manly resistance to British oppression burns in the bosom of every frontiersman. The military force of the infant settlement is armed, and under the command of Captain Robertson and Isaac Shelby, and their comrades in arms, penetrated the rugged and trackless wilderness, and made the first armed resistance to arbitrary power in the West. This was in the sanguinary battle at the mouth of the Kanawa, fought October 10, 1774. Thus early did the "Volunteer State" commence her novitiate in arms. A year later the pioneer fathers of Tennessee in full convention assembled at Watauga and petitioned the "Provisional Council of North Carolina" to annex their District to that province, informing the Council of their resolves to adhere strictly to the rules and orders of the Continental Congress, and in open committee acknowledged themselves indebted to the United Colonies, their full proportion of the continental expense, and of their earnest wish to share in the glorious cause of liberty," such are their earnest words, and "offering for its advancement the services of a military force already organized under Captain Robertson, to act in the common cause on the sea-shore." How were the pledges and resolves of Watauga carried out? Time does not permit a detailed account of their several campaigns against the enemy and their tory allies at the Enore, Pacolet, King's Mountain or afterwards at Wappetaw, where Sevier and Shelby joined the camp of Marion with five hundred riflemen from the present Tennessee and drove the British to the very gates of Charlestown. It must be sufficient here to say that the soldiery of what is now upper East Tennessee had *rendezvoused* at the base of the Appalachian Range. They had ascended its summit and precipitating themselves from these heights upon the plain below, had pursued the enemy to the coasts of the Atlantic."

Emigration continued and the settlements were extended. In 1780 Col. Robertson led a colony of forty families to the remote wilderness upon the lower Cumberland Valley. A location was made not far from the present site of Nashville. This was the nucleus of the Cumberland settlements. Adventurers flocked thither; and three years afterwards the flood-gates of emigra-

tion were opened, when North Carolina established in the vicinity a military land district.

The War of the Revolution ended and the treaty of 1783 was made. Spain had, from political motives, sympathized with the Americans in the struggle for independence. But now, when independence had been achieved, and the restless vigor and energy of the American people was displaying itself in pushing towards the Westward, Spain began to be alarmed for the safety of her possessions on the gulf and along the Mississippi.

Spain possessed and occupied the whole of Louisiana and West Florida, embracing all the region west of the Mississippi, as well as its eastern bank for five hundred miles above its mouth. Besides this, she had asserted a claim to the whole eastern bank up to the mouth of the Ohio, and had taken possession of the same by virtue of her Indian treaties.

The first step taken by Spain to accomplish her purpose was intended to be conciliatory. She offered, through Gen. Wilkinson, a liberal grant of land to each family settling within her jurisdiction and the privilege of trade with Louisiana and New Orleans. Those who did not avail themselves of this offer were prohibited from the navigation of the Mississippi. Some settlements were made under this arrangement, but the scheme was not fruitful in results. In Butler and Monette may be seen a full account of the English, French, and Spanish intrigues with the Western people. They are too remote in their bearing upon our subject to be given here. It is sufficient to say that it was the abiding purpose of Spain to destroy our Western settlements. First, she hoped and intrigued to separate them from the Federal Government. Failing in that, there remained two reserves, to set the Indians upon them and to close the Mississippi against them. She did both.

CHAPTER XXX.

Want of Protection of the Old Confederation by the People of Tennessee—Rejection of New Federal Constitution—Afterwards accepted it—Quotation from Monette and Putnam—Gen. Robertson's Protest against the Policy of the Government—Guardouqui's report on his Return to Spain—Measures Proposed in the East to Discourage Emigration to the West—Gov. Morris, Dr. Ramsey, Gov. Blount's Letter to the People of Tennessee, July 5, 1795.

Under the old Confederation the people of Tennessee had been unaided and unprotected in all their Indian wars. They had received neither troops nor money. They were isolated and cut off from trade with the East by mountain rangers, and cut off from New Orleans by Spanish prohibition; the United States was either unable or unwilling to secure for them the free navigation of the Mississippi river and, in general, were little disposed to take notice of their grievances. They entertained no strong affection for the old Confederation, and when the new Federal Constitution was submitted to them the first time they rejected it by an almost unanimous vote. Afterwards, they did accept it, in the hope that the General Government would extend them relief. The hope was vain. Monette says:*

“The prevalence of Eastern influence in Congress and in the Cabinet of the United States was strong, and swayed the national policy as to measures affecting the Eastern people, and these measures operated no less perniciously upon them than if they had been prompted by interested jealousy in the Atlantic States.”

Putnam says:† “The politicians in the Eastern States said, let us secure the fisheries; what matters it if the navigation of the Mississippi is yielded for five and twenty years or forever!”

Not only did the General Government afford them no aid against the Indians, but refused to allow them to pursue and chastise them for their murderous incursions, when Spanish traders had been offering pay for American scalps. Speaking of this prohibition, Putnam says: “The people had long complained, and they had a thousand causes for complaint, one for every life taken or body maimed among them. When is this to end? Where are the

* Vol. II, p. 262.

† History Middle Tennessee, see p. 324.

benefits of the Union? Is every ear deaf to our complaints and every heart callous to our suffering? This prohibition sounded like a death knell. What now cares the Government for us; what care we for the Government and its prohibitions?"*

Gen. Robertson protested against the forbearing policy of the Government, but in vain. Speaking of the Spanish influence he said: "They have tempted us to abandon our settlements; failing to accomplish by their specious object, their sinister designs, they have backed our savage neighbors to a war of extermination upon us. We despise them for their duplicity, and scorn their allurements, and we abhor and curse their savage cruelties."†

Putnam writing of the results of 1793, says: "During the last ten years there was no moment in which an authoritative word from the Spanish Government 'to be at peace with their settlements,' would have been disregarded by the Creeks and Cherokees, and her officers and traders well knew it."‡

The able Guardoqui, after his return to Spain from the United States, said: "He had conversed with some individuals in America who expressed their wishes to see the navigation of the Mississippi *prohibited and our limits narrowed* in order to have the productions of the Western country brought through the Atlantic States and to have our population concentrated."§

It is a fact that measures were proposed in the East to discourage emigration to the West. Gov. Morris himself expressed his opposition to encouraging settlements in the West, which would in time grow into such population as would control the parent States. One scheme was "so to fix and settle the ratio of representation in Congress, that the old States could, in all coming time; preserve and enjoy the *political ascendancy*." There was a disposition in the East to yield for a number of years, if not to sacrifice entirely, the navigation of the Mississippi. The Western people, in general, believed that the purpose of those who had political power was to secure their own commercial advantages on the Atlantic Ocean, wholly regardless of the interests of the settlers in the Western wilds.||

It was this spirit which produced the insurrection in Western Pennsylvania, and had nearly lost both Tennessee and Kentucky to the Federal Union.

In this connection we quote from the letter of Dr. Ramsey before mentioned. He says:

* p. 418. † Putnam, p. 426. ‡ p. 320. § Putnam, p. 441. || Putnam, p. 453.

“To estimate properly the virtue, the patriotism, the loyalty and the republicanism of the Western people, when, with a noble disinterestedness and self-sacrificing devotion to the Union, they resisted those artful and powerful appeals to their local and sectional interests, let it be remembered that the several communities to whom these appeals were made, had penetrated through a vast desert of wilderness and mountain; that their own courage had expelled a savage enemy; their own rifles had achieved the conquest; their own enterprise had planted and defended their settlements; their own efforts had made their fortunes, provided them a home and the benefit of a simple but stable government, that with little assistance from the older States, almost none from the General Government, the wilderness under their own industry and culture, blossomed as the rose, and that the fertile banks of the navigable streams, in the distant valleys, in whose bosoms they dwelt, were rewarding them with a luxuriant harvest of rich fruits—their own labor upon their own fields; that the intervention of hundreds of miles and great mountain ranges isolated them from the commands of their Atlantic countrymen, and that for the products of the whole West there was but one great outlet to the Atlantic Ocean and the markets of the world—the Mississippi River, and that the right of freely navigating that stream, though guaranteed to them as a result of that Revolution which they had assisted to effect, and of those victories, achieved in part by their valor, was still withheld from them under the vexatious delay of Federal negotiation, under such circumstances of admitted neglect, disappointed expectation, deferred hope, and accumulated wrong, that to remain constant and faithful and loyal to the Union is alike a rare instance and evidence of all that is heroic in forbearance, lofty in patriotism, and majestic in national virtue.”

If no redress could be had during Washington's administration, still less could any be hoped for under the succeeding administration, which was alike characterized by its tame submission to foreign insults as by the ferocity of its alien and sedition laws. There was no hope from the Government; the people of the West must help themselves or be irretrievably ruined, as they were justified at the time in supposing. Gov. Blount planned an enterprise for their relief. We have seen what that plan was. It was to secure to them the free navigation of the Mississippi; a right which had been declared in the 29th Section of the Bill of Rights of Tennessee to be “one of the inherent rights of the citizens of this State.” This provision was inserted at the instance and by the efforts of

Gov. Blount in 1796, two years before he was impeached for making an arrangement to carry it into effect. The people of Tennessee looked to Gov. Blount for relief; he had been identified with the early history and government of the State, and felt it to be his duty to attempt to secure relief. He made the effort and failed. For making this effort he was expelled from the Senate of the United States and impeached. But those who sought to disgrace him were disappointed. What was intended for his humiliation redounded in his greater honor. If he had been a popular favorite before, he was now regarded as a victim of Eastern selfishness and as a martyr to the cause of the Western people.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Correspondence between Mr. Pickering and the Chevalier D'Yrujo, the Spanish Minister.

In March, 1797, the Spanish minister, the Chevalier D'Yrujo, conceived the opinion, or at least so gave out, that the British were preparing an expedition in Canada for the purpose of making a descent on the Spanish possessions on the Mississippi and the Gulf. He communicated this opinion to Mr. Pickering, Secretary of State, to put him on his guard against the alleged danger of a violation of the neutral territory of the United States. Mr. Pickering did not believe that any such invasion was contemplated, and communicated with Mr. Liston, the British minister, on the subject. Mr. Liston replied that there was no such expedition being fitted out. But the Spanish minister was not satisfied, and continued to profess at least to believe that there was a secret plan on foot to invade the Spanish possessions. He kept his detective agents at work and his investigations in this direction very naturally led him to take an active part in the Blount affair.

It appears from the correspondence that passed between Mr. Pickering and the Spanish minister, that Mr. Pickering did not believe the Chevalier was in good faith in the declaration of his opinion. In fact, Mr. Pickering declared in a communication to him that he regarded his statement as a pretext, and in a letter to him, dated August 8, 1797, he reiterates the charge and says:

“I return to your letter. You mention your communications to the Baron de Carondelet respecting the intended expedition from Canada. From that moment, you say, “imperious necessity and the great principle of self-defence, made his Catholic Majesty’s officers turn their thoughts to objects of a more urgent nature than running the boundary line.” And here you introduce Mr. Blount’s letter, and the late detected conspiracy—as evincing how far their conduct in this respect was necessary.” It is wonderful, sir, that you should attempt to make it be believed that Mr. Blount’s letter and the late detected conspiracy had any connection with the expedition which you suggested was preparing on the lakes of Canada, against Upper Louisiana. All that is yet discovered of Mr. Blount’s project or conspiracy, proves that it was to have been formed in one of the States *South of the River*

Ohio, and that it was destined against the Floridas, and perhaps Lower Louisiana. I therefore feel myself, for this and the other reasons before exhibited, still warranted in considering the suspected Canada expedition among the *pretexts* for delaying to evacuate the posts, and to run the boundary line; and, consequently, that your charge, that I have in this instance 'palpably attempted to make groundless and unfair impressions on the public mind,' is alike unfounded and unbecoming your public character to suggest."

Wherever Mr. Pickering says anything which has a bearing in favor of Gov. Blount it may be relied upon, for he was among his most inveterate enemies. And there are two things in the passage above quoted that are worthy of note. The first of these is the modified manner in which Mr. Pickering speaks of Governor Blount's enterprise; it is not unqualifiedly a *conspiracy*, but a "*project* or conspiracy." The second is, that Gov. Blount had no connection with any expedition being fitted out on the lakes. He stamps with falsehood the declaration of "citizen Mitchel" furnished the House Committee by the kindness of the officious Chevalier.

But more important than this is another passage from the same communication, which is as follows:

"You say that Mr. Blount acted in this matter with the knowledge and intelligence of the British minister. This is not likely to be true. It is in proof, by other evidence than the British minister's notes, that he did not, and could not, authorize the projected expedition against the Floridas; and particularly, that one of his strong objections against it was, that it contemplated the employing of the Indians. Although he thought it proper to submit the project to the consideration and decision of his government, nobody, therefore, will believe that he authorized Mr. Blount, or was even privy to his measures of preparing the Indians for War. Besides, Dr. Romaine, who may be presumed to be well acquainted with Mr. Blount's plot, suggests that it is not the project offered to Mr. Liston by Chisholm. These are his words: "Mr. Blount is totally unknown to Mr. Liston, and so are all his views." And there is a passage in Mr. Blount's letter which countenances the Doctor's assertion, and indicates that, although Chisholm and Blount had some communications with each other, yet their views were not precisely the same. Mr. Blount, in his letter to Carey, says: "Where Captain Chisholm is I do not know. I left him in Philadelphia, in March, and he frequently visited the

Minister and spoke upon the subject; but I believe he will go into the Creek Nation, by way of South Carolina or Georgia. He gave out he was going to England, *but I did not believe him.*" These last words afford a pretty strong proof that they were not acting wholly in concert. Probably Mr. Blount endeavored to persuade Chisholm that he would co-operate in the prosecution of *his* scheme; while at the same time he might have another of his own, or in concert with Dr. Romaine, and stand ready, in the event of things, to make his advantage of either—whichever should offer the best prospect of success. Doctor Roymane, you see, says that Mr. Blount is totally unknown to Mr. Liston. But is well known that Mr. Blount was your frequent guest, and intimate companion; and that he was on this intimate footing with you during the whole time that you were representing to the government your suspicions of British expeditions. After the discovery of the conspiracy was made public, you formally requested the American Government to punish him for so scandalous a crime. But seeing that Mr. Blount was a citizen of the United States, and not a subject of Spain, it would have been decent in you to have left him with his own government, without interposing your advice. But especially when you knew that the President had laid his letter before Congress; and the two Houses were deliberating on the modes of punishing him; when the investigation had proceeded so far that a committee of the Senate had reported a resolution that he should be impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors; for you then to interfere was singularly improper; and it was such an ostentatious display of zeal as, under all the known circumstances, suggests more than one interpretation."

This extract from Mr. Pickering's letter shows several very important things. It shows first, that Mr. Pickering did not believe that Gov. Blount was in conspiracy with the British minister to seize the Spanish possessions and transfer them to Great Britain to the prejudice of the United States. And it is precisely in this intent that the grievance of Gov. Blount's alleged offence was taken to consist.

It shows in the second place that Mr. Pickering believed Doctor Romaine's testimony, and if that testimony be accepted, then Gov. Blount had committed no crime, for the Doctor's evidence clears up the mystery of the Carey letter by showing that no determination—much less steps—had been taken to do anything at all in the premises.

It shows, third, that Mr. Pickering did not believe that Gov. Blount was acting in concert with Chisholm, so that all the evidence against Chisholm has no relation whatever to Gov. Blount.

It shows, fourth, that Mr. Pickering believed that the Spanish minister was treacherous and wholly destitute of truth and honor.

It shows, lastly, that Mr. Pickering did not know what Gov. Blount's purpose was, and, consequently, could not honestly pronounce him guilty.

Now, Mr. Pickering, as has been stated, was one of the most active prosecutors of Gov. Blount. If he thought as he said, then there was no other evidence against him than the Carey letter. But Romayne's testimony explains this letter. Besides, from the letter itself, as we have already seen, there was no plan, no purpose to do anything at all, much less to do a criminal act. That Governor Blount was expelled from the Senate and impeached by the House under these circumstances can only be accounted for by the feverish state of the public mind, the violence of party spirit, and, perhaps, too, on less excusable grounds, which may some day come to light, but which at present must remain matter of mere conjecture.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The Navigation of the Mississippi River—Disposition of Congress to surrender it—History of Negotiations in regard to the same.

The question of the navigation of the Mississippi river first arose in 1779-80. At that time the United States had no diplomatic relations with Spain, and the matter was brought up by the French ambassador, the Chevalier de la Luzerne. In a secret communication to Congress he informed that body, that by the command of the King of France the King of Spain would join the United States against England on certain conditions. One of these conditions was, that the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi river should belong to Spain. The conditions proposed were rejected by Congress.

In August, 1781, it was proposed in Congress to vest in the Minister at Madrid discretionary powers over the navigation of the Mississippi. The proposition was unanimously rejected.

The question was not again opened until 1785, when the Spanish minister, Don Gardouqui, arrived with powers to negotiate a treaty. Mr. Jay, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was appointed to treat with him, and one clause of his instructions made the free navigation of the Mississippi and the use of a port near its mouth, an indispensable condition to the conclusion of the treaty.

On the 29th of May, 1786, Mr. Jay addressed a letter to the President of Congress, suggesting the advisability of appointing a committee with power to instruct, and direct him on every point of the proposed treaty. The letter was referred to committee. The committee required Mr. Jay to give a specific statement of the difficulties. He did so, in a written statement. He advised that the United States should abandon to Spain the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi river for twenty-five to thirty years, but that Spain should purchase many articles from the United States, of which whale oil and cod fish were especially insisted upon.*

*Journal, vol. 4, pp. 45-63.

“From this instant,” says Mr. Benton in his speech in the Senate, February 2, 1830, “the division between the North and the South, on the subject of the West, sprung into existence. A series of motions and votes ensued, and a struggle, which continued two

years, in which Maryland and all South voted one way, and New Jersey and all North voted the other." Mr. King, of New York, moved to repeal the clause in the instructions given to Mr. Jay, making the free navigation of the Mississippi a *sine qua non*; and the motion was carried by the votes of the seven Northern States against the others. Mr. Pinckney, of South Carolina, moved to revoke the instructions and put a stop to the whole negotiation, which was lost by the same vote. Mr. Pinckney afterwards moved, to declare it a violation of the Articles of the Confederation for seven States to alter the instructions for negotiating a treaty, those articles requiring the consent of nine States. This motion was lost by the same vote. Thus it appears that these gentlemen were not only willing to surrender the free navigation, but were further ready to violate the solemn Articles to do so. Seeing no hope of securing anything more, the delegates from Virginia then moved to make it a *sine qua non* that citizens of the United States be allowed to export their produce on paying a small export duty. But even this was lost, and by the same vote, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania—seven, against Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, five, Delaware not being present.

The navigation of the Mississippi was saved at this time only by a lucky accident. In 1787 a citizen of North Carolina was arrested at Natchez and his vessel and cargo confiscated by order of the Spanish Governor, Grandpre. Mr. Madison took advantage of the incident in 1788. In 1788 the Governor of North Carolina, its Legislature, and all its delegates in Congress made pressing appeals, and Mr. Madison was thus able to carry a resolution providing that the whole subject be referred to the new Federal Government, which was to go into operation the following year. The question was fortunately settled for the time, but the spirit in which the purpose to give up the Mississippi originated, had lost none of its characteristic enterprise. The notion that the growth of the West was incompatible with the supremacy of the Northeast, and that its rivers were to be explored for their special benefit, was, as Mr. Benton says, still strongly rooted in their minds.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The Indian Wars—Refusal of Congress to extend aid to the Western Pioneers—Pioneers, without hope of aid from the General Government, rely upon themselves.

With regard to the sufferings of the young West under its Indian wars, and its vain appeals for so many years to the Federal Government for succor and relief, Mr. Benton, in the speech before referred to, presents the following startling but true picture. He says:

“The history of twelve years’ suffering in Tennessee, from 1780 to 1792, when the inhabitants succeeded in conquering peace without the aid of Federal troops; and of sixteen years’ carnage in Kentucky, from 1774 to 1790, when the first effectual relief began to be extended, would require volumes of detail for which we have no time, and powers of description for which I have no talent. Then was witnessed the scenes of woe and death, of carnage and destruction, which no words of mine can ever paint; instances of heroism in men, of fortitude, and devotedness in women, of instinctive courage in little children, which the annals of the most celebrated nations can never surpass. Then was seen the Indian warfare in all its horrors—that warfare which spares neither decrepit age, nor blooming youth, nor manly strength, nor infant weakness; in which the sleeping family awoke from their beds in the midst of flames and slaughter; when virgins were led off captive by savage monsters; when mothers were loaded with their children and compelled to march; and when, unable to keep up, were relieved of their burthen by seeing the brains of infants beat out on a tree; when the slow consuming fire of the stake devoured its victim in the presence of pitying friends, and in the midst of exulting demons; when the corn was planted, the fields were ploughed, the crops were gathered, the cows were milked, water was brought from the spring, and God was worshiped under the guard and protection of armed men; when the night was the season for traveling, the impervious forest the highway, and the place of safety most remote from the habitation of man; when every house was a fort, and every fort subject to seige and assault. Such was the warfare in the infant settlements of Kentucky and Tennessee, and which the aged men, actors in the dreadful scenes, have related to me so many times.”

What was the response of Congress to the piteous appeal that came up to them from these sorely tried pioneers? Let one instance serve for all.

On June 21, 1786, when this warfare was at its height, a resolution introduced by Mr. Grayson, of Virginia, was reported, providing that; "The Secretary of War direct the commanding officer of the troops to detach two companies to the Rapids of the Ohio, to protect the inhabitants from the depredations and incursions of the Indians."

This request was not made while the colonies were collecting all their energies in the struggle for independence, but after peace had been declared; it did not ask for the levy of new troops, but only that those already in service should be moved to their assistance; it asked for them not for aggressive operations, but for defence; finally, it asked for but the companies. The request was not merely reasonable, it was most modest. But it was refused. After speaking of a second failure in this direction, Mr. Benton said further, as follows:

"Defeated, but not subdued—repulsed, but not vanquished—invincible in the work of justice and humanity, the Virginia delegation immediately commenced new operations and devised new plans for the relief of the West. On the very next day, June 30th, a motion was made by Mr. Lee, seconded by Mr. Monroe, to have one thousand men of the Virginia militia held in readiness, and called out in case of necessity, for the protection of the West. Even this was resisted! A motion was made by Mr. King, of Massachusetts, seconded by Mr. Long of New Hampshire, to strike out the number "one thousand." It was struck out accordingly, there being but five States, to wit: Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia in favor of retaining it. The resolution, eviscerated of this essential part, was allowed to pass; and thus, on the 30th day of June, in the year 1786, the Governor of Virginia obtained the privilege from the Continental Congress to order some militia in Kentucky to hold themselves in readiness to protect the country in case of necessity! Thus, at the end of twelve years from the commencement of the Indian wars, Kentucky obtained that much! She fought out the war from 1780 to 1792 upon her own bottom, without the assent, and against the commands of Congress. Expresses were often despatched to recall her expeditions going in pursuit of Indians who had invaded her settlements. The decisive expedition to the town of Nicojack, which was formed upon the plan of Mr. Grayson, was, in legal acceptance, a lawless

invasion of a friendly tribe. The brave and patriotic men, who swam the Tennessee river, three quarters of a mile wide, shoving their arms before them on rafts, and stormed the town, and drove the Indians from the gap in the mountain—the Thermopylæ of the country—and gave peace to the Cumberland settlements, did it with Federal halters round their necks; for the expedition was contrary to law.”

In addition to what has been adduced to show the desire of the Northeast to prevent the growth of the West, by attempting to surrender the Mississippi and by delivering the inhabitants into the hands of the savages, may be mentioned those measures specially designed to check emigration, such as the restrictions placed upon the sale of the public lands and the refusal to treat for the cession of Indian lands.

The pioneers of Tennessee had nothing to expect from the general government. The treatment they had received from this quarter had taught them to rely upon themselves and upon themselves alone. It should be no more a matter of surprise that they wished to acquire the free navigation of the Mississippi without the consent of the general government, than that they should make war upon the Indians without that consent. Nor is it surprising that they should crown Gov. Blount with fresh honors, after his expulsion and impeachment, for his patriotism and his devotion to their welfare.

On July 5, 1797, Gov. Blount wrote from Philadelphia to the people of Tennessee the following letter:

“In a few days you will see published by order of Congress a letter said to have been written by me to James Carey. It makes quite a fuss here. The people upon the Western waters will see nothing but good in it, for so I intended it, especially for Tennessee.”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Further continuation of Gov. Blount's History from the unpublished Manuscript—Dangers which environed the Settlers in Tennessee—Territory, owned by the Spanish Government—Holding the Mouth of the Mississippi River—The Indians—The Unfriendly Restrictions of the Spaniards on the Navigation of the Mississippi River—The Treaty of October, 1795—Spain's Treaty with France excites alarm—The free Navigation of the Mississippi River put in Jeopardy by Spain's Treaty with France—The Expulsion of our Minister from France—Gov. Blount, who supported the idea of the command of the Navigation of the Mississippi River by the Western people, was their Champion—His welcome on his return to Tennessee—Made Speaker of the State Senate—An account of his reception.

The following accurate and succinct extract from the MSS, heretofore referred to, will serve to supplement and explain what has been said in regard to the relation of the people of Tennessee to their foreign neighbors.

It seemed impossible for Congress to realize the dangers and trials which environed and harrassed the frontier settlements, or to comprehend the causes and extent of the exasperation between the Indians and Spaniards on the one side, and the people of Tennessee and Kentucky on the other. The Spanish Government owned the Floridas and Louisiana, holding the mouth of the Mississippi and the west side of that stream up to latitude 42°. Many of the hostile incursions and savage atrocities committed by the Indians were traceable to the Spaniards. Their unfriendly restrictions upon the navigation of the Mississippi had been the source of constant annoyance and injustice to the inhabitants, and the occasion of warm remonstrances by Governor Blount. But by the treaty of October, 1795, Spain had agreed that the navigation should be free to the citizens of the United States. A more friendly feeling had begun to be cultivated. The savages had received such a wholesome chastisement at Nickajack, in 1794, that they were in no condition to renew hostilities. Under these circumstances the Spanish authorities offered great inducements to our

Western people to accept liberal grants of land on the west side of the great river, and to colonize that distant region.

In the midst of these negotiations, early in 1797, the report became public and was generally believed, that Spain, in a treaty which she had been compelled to make with France, had by a secret clause retroceded to her the Floridas and Louisiana, including the vast territory west of the Mississippi. France had for several years occupied a menacing attitude towards the United States, and had conducted herself with insufferable arrogance towards our Government. It was easy to believe that if she succeeded in getting the control of the Mississippi she would close its navigation against us, except upon the most exacting and oppressive conditions. In our treaty with England, in 1783, it was agreed as between us and her, that its navigation should be free to both nations. We had just made a similar contract with Spain. No such compact existed with France, and in her well known attitude of hostility none could then be hoped for. She had settled and formerly owned Louisiana. Many of its inhabitants inheriting her blood and language and shared her angry feeling towards our Government. The prospect of losing the free navigation of the Mississippi, the dread of the influence of the French upon the Indians on our borders, and the defeat of the colonization scheme, already in process of fulfillment, prompted those who fore saw the danger, to contemplate the project of seizing the Spanish possessions before they were surrendered to France. Mr. Blount, then Senator, espoused the enterprise, and undertook to prepare the Indian tribes to join in it, or at least to remain neutral. Thus a scheme which the learned Hugh Williamson declared was originally a mere land speculation, or a plan for establishing a colony beyond the Mississippi, became the nucleus for a combination to resist the establishment of French Supremacy on the Gulf of Mexico, and on our Southern and Western boundaries, together with the command of the Mississippi, from its mouth to the Falls of St. Anthony. The long forbearance of our government in hopes that the French Directory would listen to reason, finally culminated in the expulsion of our ministers, Pinckney and Marshall, from France. The desire of our government for peace with that nation must have been so intense as to lead the Western people to believe that the cession of her Territories by Spain would not be treated as a cause of war. And accordingly, when it came to the knowledge of President Adams that Mr. Blount was engaged in the scheme, he took immediate steps, in accordance with his gen-

eral policy of forbearance, to arrest a measure which threatened to complicate still more our foreign relations. He communicated his information to the Senate, and that body with great haste expelled Mr. Blount, in July, 1797. His error consisted in attempting by a sensational *coup d'état*, what the government would have been compelled to do sooner or later, if a change in the policy of the French nation had not made a settlement possible by the purchase of Louisiana.

The suppression of this enterprise did not settle the vexed question. It continued for years to cause anxiety to our government, and gloomy apprehensions to our people. In 1797 the secret cession of the country to France was believed to have been already made. The only one now known certainly to have been made was agreed on in the year 1800, but was not made public until 1802. As soon as it became known, President Jefferson wrote to Mr. Livingston, our minister to France, that if that government, under the treaty with Spain, should take possession of New Orleans, the United States must become allies of Great Britain and antagonists of France. The matter created great excitement throughout the country, and in Congress, where a bill was introduced to raise an army to meet the possible contingencies. As a final effort to escape a war, James Monroe was commissioned to join Mr. Livingston, our minister at Paris, and the purchase of Louisiana was made in 1803.

So important was it to hurry this purchase that both of the contracting parties concurred in a violation of the rights of Spain, who had stipulated in her act of cession to France, that if ever that nation should wish to dispose of the Territory, Spain was to have the preference as a purchaser. Thus was accomplished without war what Mr. Blount and his people so ardently desired, the extinction of the French dominion on our borders, and over our greatest highway.

The Western people had persevered in their determination sooner or later to secure the command of the Mississippi. Mr. Blount, who lost his seat in the Senate for entering prematurely upon that enterprise, was still their ideal of a fervid patriot and a great statesman. On his return to Tennessee he was welcomed every where by the people as a martyr to their cause. His friend, General James White, who was Speaker of the State Senate, resigned his membership to enable his constituents to testify their regard for Mr. Blount, who was promptly elected to the Senate and to the vacant Speaker-

ship. If he did anything wrong, says the historian Ramsey, it was in over-devotion to North Carolina and Tennessee.

Cobbett's *Porcupine*, a celebrated political journal opposed to Blount, in its issue of October 10, 1797, contained the following letter from Knoxville, dated 18th September :

"On Saturday last returned to this town the Hon. William Blount. As soon as his approach was made known the volunteer troop of cavalry, commanded by John Lavender, Esq., and a large concourse of citizens, hastened to receive him, and met him eight miles from this place, where, after refreshments, he was conducted into town in the following order, viz :

"A detachment of the troop of cavalry. The Hon. Wm. Blount, accompanied by General White and the Hon. William Stuart, late Speaker of the House of Representatives ; the troop of cavalry ; citizens in files.

"We are happy to say that Mr. Blount has received on his journey through this State the most flattering and hearty welcome from every description of citizens, a welcome justly due from a grateful people to the father, friend, and protector of their State."

Another writer, evidently a political opponent, said of him :

"In the new State his influence was overwhelming. On his return to Tennessee, so far from being shunned as a disgraced man, he was received with triumph ; was elected to the State Senate, it is said, and made Speaker thereof, and was only prevented by his sudden death from mounting, as if in defiance to the Federal Government, the gubernatorial chair."

CHAPTER XXXV.

Dr. Ramsay's account of the visit of James Mathers, Sergeant-at-Arms of the United States Senate to arrest Gov. Blount—Dr. Ramsay's answer to Tradueers of Gov. Blount—Judge Robertson's Letter to Gov. James D. Porter—Letter of Hon. Hu. Williamson to Hon. Thos. Blount, March 3, 1801, with copy of Memo. accompanying this Letter, giving an Account of the Origin and Progress of a Speculation that terminated in a project that was called "Blount's Conspiracy"—Continuation of Account of Life of Gov. Blount.

Another instance of the attachment of the people of Tennessee for Gov. Blount is the following, from the letter of Dr. Ramsay, already referred to. Dr. Ramsay says :

"The sergeant-at-arms of the United States Senate, James Mathers, soon after repaired to Knoxville, with the purpose of arresting the ex-Senator, and of taking him in custody to the seat of government. After the service of process upon Blount, the sergeant-at-arms found it impossible to execute that part of his official duty which required him to take the accused to Philadelphia. He refused to go. Mathers was treated by the citizens of Knoxville with marked civility and attention. He became for several days the guest of Gov. Blount, and was hospitably entertained by the State authorities. After some days, wishing to return with his prisoner to Philadelphia, he summoned a *posse* to his assistance. But not a man could be found willing to accompany him. Whatever foundation there may have been in the charge preferred against him, there was no one in Tennessee who viewed his conduct as criminal, unpatriotic, or unfriendly to the true interests of the State or the West; and all refused to sanction the proceedings against him. The influence of the district marshal was either withheld or was impotent amongst the countrymen of Blount. The sergeant-at-arms, convinced of the fruitlessness of further attempt to execute one part of his mission, started home, and some of the citizens accompanied him a few miles from town, when, assuring him that William Blount could not be taken from Tennessee as a prisoner, bade him a polite adieu." Dr. Ramsay continued : "Had he lived longer, the State would still have confided in, and rewarded him

further. His services and his abilities were never more highly appreciated than at the time of his death."

With regard to the aspersions cast upon the memory of Gov. Blount by non-critical writers, Dr. Ramsay continues:

"Was he ever traduced at home, or repudiated in Tennessee? The very name, Blount, has always carried with it a talismanic potency at our hustings and at our polls and before our voters. A brother of the accused Senator was a few years after his expulsion from the Senate, elected to the position of Governor of the State, and re-elected to the same office with singular unanimity. This was Willie Blount, whose popularity with our masses has rarely been equalled. A son, Hon. Wm. G. Blount, during the administration of his uncle, Willie Blount, became Secretary of State by the vote of the Tennessee Legislature. During this time a vacancy occurred in a Congressional District, by the lamented death of John Sevier—the most popular man unquestionably in the State, then or since. Who succeeded him? The son, Wm. G. Blount. His domicile was at Knoxville, the home of his deceased father. Returning from Nashville after the resignation of his Secretaryship office, he became a candidate for Congress, was elected and became the successor of Sevier. A son-in-law of William Blount, the expelled Senator, Hon. Pleasant M. Miller, had also been elected a member of Congress at a previous session, succeeding Hon. George Washington Campbell, formerly Secretary of the United States Treasury and Minister to Russia. Mr. Miller was also frequently a member of the Legislature. Another son-in-law, Edwin Wyatt, M. D., failed only by a few votes of becoming a member of the Tennessee Legislature, in 1823; and he almost a stranger. I need not mention another son-in-law, Gen. Edward Pendleton Gaines, late of the United States Army. And here I aver that in all these political races for offices, State and Congressional, and for places of honor and distinction, involving personal and political antagonisms of every degree of virulence and earnest opposition, and invective on the stump and in the public journals of the day, I never heard the conduct of Senator Blount alluded to, his honor impugned, or his personal or political integrity and virtue maligned."

To show something of the character of the class of men who delighted to know Gov. Blount after his expulsion from the Senate, we quote from Judge Robertson's letter to Gov. Porter, before mentioned:

"The State, whose new honors were heaped upon Gov. Blount,

contained at that time, that same Jackson, and those heroic Tennesseans, Blount's friends, who conquered the Creeks and Seminoles and did not "deliver New Orleans into," but from the hands of Great Britain.

"The people of Tennessee were greatly indignant at the attempted dishonor and indignity put upon themselves and their representative, and, as they were neither moral nor physical cowards, they had the manliness to stand by Blount in his troubles, and resented his treatment by heaping fresh honors upon him, and they were ever ready to vindicate, as they did, their own good name and honor in battle against Indians and English, not only at New Orleans, but at Queenstown and Lundy's Lane. It is not so well known as it should be, that Scott's best troops at Queenstown and Lundy's Lane were recruited in Tennessee. Gen. Scott was ever prompt to acknowledge it."

We conclude our account with the following letter from Hon. Hu. Williamson to Hon. Thomas Blount, with accompanying statement, marked "A."

"NEW YORK, *March*, 3, 1808.

"DEAR SIR: Some weeks ago a gentleman from the Western country called upon me with a letter from an old acquaintance in his neighborhood. In that letter I was requested to call upon Dr. Romaine and ask him to hand me certain letters that had been written by a Mr. Marshall, of Kentucky, to the late Gov. Blount—on a subject that made much noise. The bearer of the letter to me, being acquainted with Marshall's handwriting, would be able to swear to it in some action for defamation that is now pending. Dr. Romaine assured me that he never had seen or heard of any such letters, but he wished to see the gentlemen who brought me the letter. I introduced the gentlemen, to whom the doctor gave a detailed account of the whole business that had been called a conspiracy.

"It was a pure land speculation in which some men of rank in Europe were principals. But the situation of those men and circumstances of the time made it improper for Dr. Romaine, when sent for to Philadelphia, to explain the story. He now finds himself at liberty. I am told that by order of the Senate there was a pamphlet printed giving an account of the sundry examinations of witnesses, or of the proofs that were adduced on that trial for expulsion. The object of this is to request that if you can lay your hands on a copy of that pamphlet, you will send it to me.

“My feelings have been hurt once, and again, within a few months viz: Since Burr’s trial came on, by squibs in the newspapers in this city. It has been alleged that if two gentlemen had been hanged, on a former occasion, we should not have been troubled at this time with Burr’s conspiracy. As those gentlemen were named I wished to discover the authors or authoresses of such malignant observations, and from printers who refused to publish I traced the writers.

“My wish is now (having the correct key to open that obscure project,) to draw up a full and clear account of a projected land speculation ignorantly called a conspiracy.

“Time and circumstances may come in which it may be proper to give it to the world. At any rate it should be taken while it may be had.

“It will be clear that, as our affairs then stood, the United States would have been essentially profited by the contemplated speculation. But I have forgotten so many of the old alleged facts that I need the pamphlet to refresh my memory.

“The Jersey member having to refresh himself, laid down the Capitol for a few months from his shoulders. Congress seems at present to be seriously entering upon the usual duties of the session. I wish them a good deliverance, and am, with the sincerest esteem, your obedient servant,

“HUG. WILLIAMSON.

“HONORABLE THOS. BLOUNT.”

(This is in handwriting of Dr. Hug. Williamson.)

A

*A Short Account of the Origin and Progress of a Speculation that Terminated in a Project that was called Blount’s Conspiracy.**

“In the year 1795, sundry gentlemen in London, wishing to increase their fortunes, (some of them having court interest,) projected

*The above is a copy of an unsigned paper which accompanied an original letter written by Hugh Williamson to Gen. Thomas Blount, dated March 3, 1808, and which letter is copied herewith some eight or ten years ago, exact time not remembered. The Honorable Supreme Judge, Wm R Rodman of Washington, N. C., who was a nephew of Gov. Wm. Blount, and named for him, since had the original letter addressed to Gen. Thomas Blount, of Tarborough, N. C., at Washington city by Dr. Hugh Williamson, then of New York — which letter was dated 3d of March, 1808, and was mailed to Gen. Blount on the 1th, and marked free. Gen. Thomas Blount died at Washington in 1812, while attending Congress. This original letter was accompanied by a “statement,” evidently in Dr. Williamson’s handwriting, and though not signed by Williamson, was intended to be connected with the letter.

a plan for obtaining and settling a province on the Mississippi.

“It was known to those gentlemen that in the year 1787, when Mr. Gardoquin was minister to the United States from the Court of Spain, that court was very desirous to cause the citizens of the United States, especially the inhabitants of Kentucky, to remove and settle on the western side of the Mississippi, in the territory of Spain. By that measure they expected to draw off the people who were very clamorous and nearly riotous about getting possession of the navigation of the Mississippi.

“The whole course of that business being known to the gentlemen in question, they had a right to suppose that Spain would not have any objection to making a grant of land on the west side of the Mississippi to be settled by people from the United States.

“The Marquis de las Casas, Count Montier, and Dr. Romaine, were the original projectors of the speculation. The Marquis de las Casas was at that time ambassador from Spain to the Court of London. Count Montier, before the French revolution, had been minister to the United States from the King of France, but was out of favor, under the French republic, etc., was in London. Spain at that period was at peace with England, but she had lately been at war with the French republic.

“The plan of this triumvirate was to obtain the grant of a tract of land bounded to the eastward by the Mississippi, to the southward and westward by the Missouri, and to the northward by a parallel of latitude, the 42d degree; to be a province called the Delta. It would have contained about fourteen millions of acres.

“A form of government was prepared and a charter was made out, in which were inserted the names of the above stated three adventurers, with a blank to be filled in Madrid by such other names as might be necessary to obtaining the royal signature.

“In the form of government it was provided, among other things, that the inhabitants should enjoy the free exercise of their religion, but the proprietors were, at their own expense, to keep schools in every township or parish, for teaching the Spanish language. Thus it would follow that in time Spanish would be the language of the province. Things went on prosperously, and the company, according to accounts from Spain, were confident of success; but on the next summer, viz: in 1796, they were informed that the grant could not pass. This was, to the Spanish ambassador himself, a subject of surprise, but he learned the cause. Spain had been compelled to make peace with France, and there was a secret

article in the treaty by which she had given up all Louisiana. The projected province was included in that cession.

"Spain continued for some time at peace with England, but in 1797, at the time of the interview between Gov. Blount and Dr. Romyne, England was at war with both those nations—France and Spain.

"When it was fully ascertained that Spain had yielded Louisiana to France, the only question that presented itself to Dr. Romyne was, whether it would be safest and best for the citizens of the United States on the western waters to have an English or a French colony settled near the mouth of the Mississippi. In case of an English colony, the navigation of the Mississippi was secured to the Western States, for England had expressly given it to us by treaty, and this was the great desideratum of the Western people.

"It was also clear that the English, being a commercial nation, would accommodate the settlers in the Western States; nor could there be any danger of a territorial war with the English in that province. On the other hand, if the French should take possession of New Orleans and the Mississippi, it was very questionable whether our people could ever obtain the free navigation of that river, except by becoming French subjects. But one thing might be counted on, if we had French neighbors, viz; that we should have a constant recurrence of broils and quarrels.

"It was clear that England with a very small exertion might possess herself of New Orleans, and whether that province, when peace should be made, was claimed by France or by Spain, England would doubtless keep it, for West Florida had formerly belonged to her.

"Such was the detail that Dr. Romyne stated to Gov. Blount, and he alleged that if he could by any means be aiding to Great Britain in getting possession of New Orleans he would render the most essential service to his fellow citizens on the western waters. He would secure to them, what otherwise they had little hope of getting, the free navigation of the Mississippi, and he would obviate the arrival of a powerful and dangerous neighbor.

"Gov. Blount approved of those reasonings, and with motives truly patriotic he resolved to promote the measure. His fault was a misfortune that is too common. He trusted to an intemperate and unqualified agent.

"The plan that was to have been executed by the English government, as will appear by the detail, was by no means difficult."

In the full enjoyment of power and popularity, Gov. Blount

died on the 21st of March, 1800, at Knoxville, after a short illness, lamented by a community who revered him with filial affection. A marble slab in the First Presbyterian Church-yard covers his remains. On one side of him lies his wife, who died October 7, 1802, and on the other, his sister, Mrs. Ann Harvey, who died June 3, 1805. In respect to his merits and services, the county of Blount, and Blountville were named after him by the Legislature; and as a compliment to Mrs. Blount, the Legislature gave her name to Granger county and the town of Maryville; her maiden name being Mary Grainger. His six children who survived him, were:

First. Ann, who married Henry I. Toole, and on his death, Hadley, both of North Carolina.

Second. Mary Louisa, who married Pleasant M. Miller, of Knoxville, in April, 1801, and became the mother of Major Albert S. Miller, of the United States Army; Gen. Wm. B. Miller; Malvina, wife of Charles McClung, of Knoxville; Dorthula, wife of Gen. Alexander B. Bradford, a distinguished lawyer and soldier; Susan, wife of Joel H. Dyer, a lawyer; Barbara, wife of Col. William H. Stephens, a lawyer, formerly of Tennessee, now of California; Martha Grainger Miller; Mary Ann Miller, and John Jacob Miller.

Third. William Grainger Blount, a gentleman of ability and merit, who twice represented the Knoxville district in Congress, and died in 1827; unmarried.

Fourth, Richard Blackledge Blount, who married Catherine Miner, of Montgomery county, and died about the year 1861, leaving issue.

Fifth. Barbara Blount, born in 1792, and married to that accomplished gentleman and distinguished soldier, Major-General Edmund P. Gaines. She died in 1836, leaving one son, Edmund P., who resides in Washington City.

Sixth. Eliza Blount, who married Dr. Edward Wyatt, a surgeon in the United States Army, and died leaving children, of whom the only surviving is Mary, the widow of Josiah Ayres, now living in Colorado Territory.



